

January Cosmopolitan

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The New Novel by
REX BEACH

Illustrated by
Charles Dana Gibson
Begins in this issue of

The Three Great Cleansers



THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

By Dr. Frank Crane

MOTIVES make acts; but it is just as true that acts make motives; only their creative efficiency is subtler.

There are two kinds of people—the strong and the weak, the capable and the incapable.

The difference between them is this only: that the strong change their motives, likes, and passions at will, through patience and practise, while the weak are impotent to resist the inward desires that produce deeds.

There is no art in the world so important as the art of killing one longing and creating another in oneself.

The secret is simple, and as old as philosophy. It is that by repeating an action one can gradually induce a desire to repeat it, and by refusing a desire one can eliminate it.

To believe that and to practise this is the key to any sort of human greatness.

Do you want courage? Act as if you were brave, though you quake with fear.

Do you want calm and poise? Imitate what you wish, despite inward flutterings. At last the stubborn spirit falls into step with the willed performance.

Do you want will-power, concentration, optimism? Imagine how a person would act who possesses these qualities, and do as you think he would do; and under the incessant drill the wished-for impulses will grow.

Learn this law of reflex action. Character makes conduct, everybody knows. Only the spiritual aristocracy knows that conduct also makes character.

Are you habit-bound, weak-willed, unclean, despising yourself, always falling back into self-contempt when alone? All you need in order to climb out of the slime is imagination, with which to picture to yourself how your ideal self would act and will, with which to drive yourself to that line of action.

The process is slow. It is doubted by all the

is sure. Ten ounces of action produce one

This is the only known road to real suc-

The riches of personality are cumulative. We

And the eternal law here is: "To

given, and from him that

taken away even that

world's impotent ones. But it ounce of desire.

cess. It leads to kingship.

must earn and save them.

him that hath shall be

hath not shall be

which he hath."



DRAWING BY VINCENT ADRENTE



Vertumnus and Pomona

Gobelin tapestry by Gorguet, in the Luxembourg Museum, Paris, completed in 1899. The artist illustrates the fable, related by Ovid, in which the enamored Vertumnus (God of the Changing Year) assumes the shape and guise of an old woman in order to approach Pomona (Goddess of Orchards and Gardens), who has no desire for love and flees from the presence of men.

COSMOPOLITAN

VOL. LVI

JANUARY, 1914

NO. 2



Modern Gobelin Tapestries

Bp W. Francklyn Paris



IN a distant corner of that Promised Land to which good Americans are said to journey when they die, away from the radiance and turmoil of the Grand Boulevards, and almost hidden among the *ruelles* and *impasses* of that *quartier* so dear to Murger and the lovable characters of "La Vie de Bohème," the Manufacture Royale des Meubles de la Couronne rears its Louis Quatorzian pile along three sides of a cobbled quadrangle, shut off from the world by a twelve-foot wall. If it were not for the marble slab on the outer wall which proclaims the fact that the Manufacture Royale was established on this site, in 1667, by special edict of the *Roi Soleil*, few would recognize in the age-worn edifice the temple in which has been kept burning for more than two hundred years the fire of a disappearing art—an art which might already be dead so far as the average man is concerned, for few there be who know that patient weavers still sit at their looms, fitting thread to thread to make the things of beauty that only the rich can own.

The ancient Hôtel des Gobelins, dedicated by Louis XIV to the use of the artists and artisans employed by LeBrun in the embellishment of Versailles and the Louvre, is famed for the splendid tapestries that flowered upon its looms in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At that period, two hundred and fifty weavers and sixty apprentices were at work fashioning into sumptuous hangings the cartoons of Le Brun, Jules Romain, Coypel, Nattier, Vanloo, Audran, Oudry, and Boucher. To-day the Gobelins employ but sixty weavers.

During the troublous times of the French Revolution, and later, when all Europe was

torn up with the conflict of arms, there was grave danger that the flickering flame of tapestry weaving would die out. All that time, Brussels and Arras and the other once famous looms of Europe had already disappeared. The Pope, the King of Spain, the King of Bavaria maintained *ateliers* in Rome, Madrid, and Munich, and there were others of less importance at Turin and Naples, but one by one they all fell into disuse and were abandoned, until the Gobelins alone remained—the only repository of the age-old traditions, the sole altar upon which the sacred fire of this vanishing art was kept burning.

It, too, might have disappeared. The weavers were left unpaid for months, and that generally inexorable law of supply and demand dictated its abandonment. Tape-stries, for some unfathomable reason, no longer found favor, and priceless hangings that had been the chief ornament of palace or cathedral were relegated to lofts or cellars, there to accumulate and decay.

On two occasions, in 1794 and 1850, the proposition to discontinue the manufactory also was put forward, but each time there were enough true patriots and real Frenchmen in the Convention and the Assembly to defeat the project, and thus the fate that overtook the art of tapestry weaving at the time of the ushering in of the Christian era was avoided.

The present bears, of course, no resemblance to that benighted period, during which even the memory of the art perished. The mind cannot conceive of a repetition of that total eclipse of art which enshrouded the Middle Ages in darkness for nine hundred years. We cannot lose the memory



Duc Jean de Berry at Bourges—Gobelin tapestry



designed by Cormon for the Palais de Justice, Bourges



Coronation of Nominoë, Duke of Brittany
Gobelin tapestry by Toudouze, Palais de Justice, Rennes

of the splendid tapestries woven by Van Aelst, Pannemaker, Geubels, and other master-weavers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as the memory of the Greek and Roman art was lost during the Byzantine period; but it is conceivable that we might lose the technique and the manual ability to equal or reproduce them.

The maintenance of the Gobelins through revolutions and wars and general public indifference and apathy has at least postponed this possibility. Let us be grateful for that.

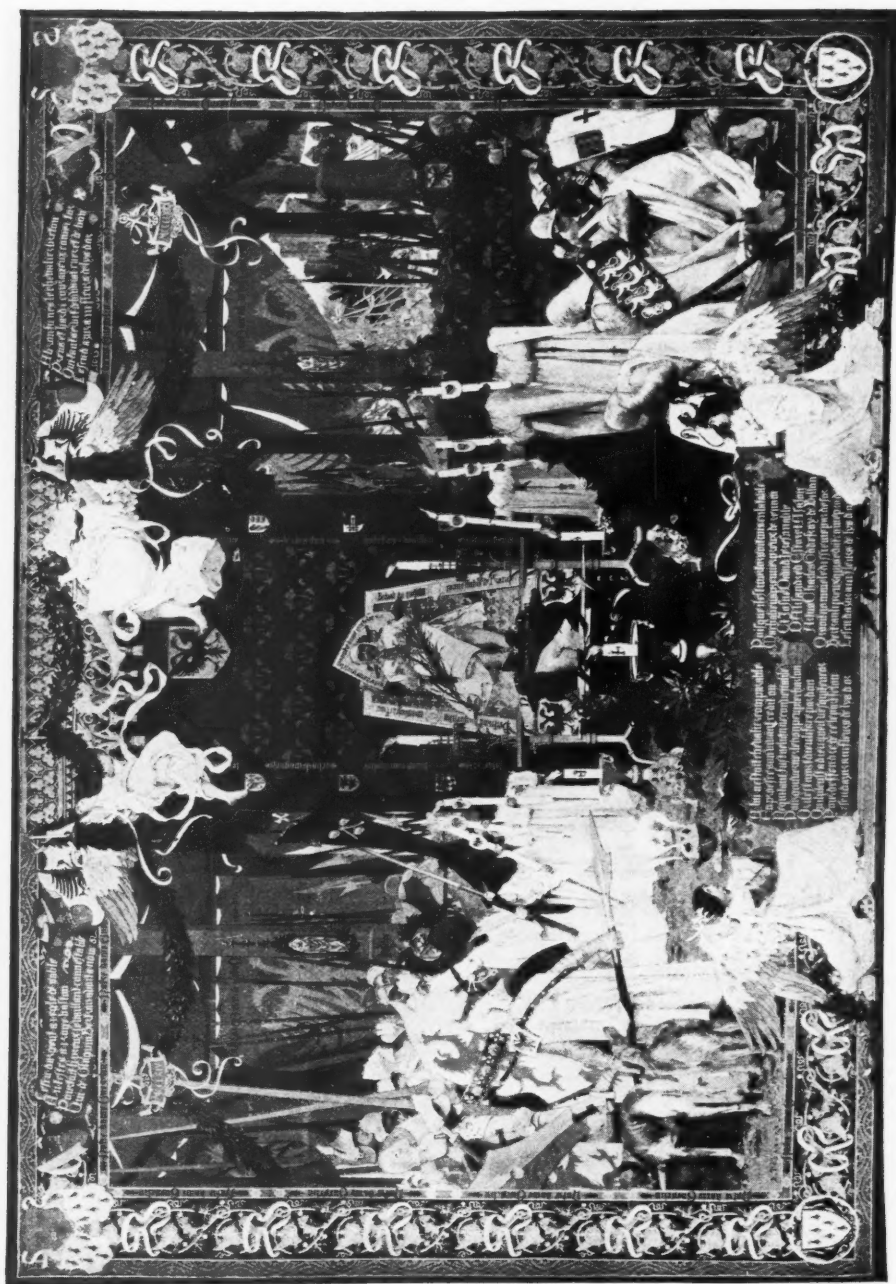
It is not the purpose of this article to review the history of the manufactory from the time of its foundation. Its achievements, until the close of the Napoleonic wars, are well known. Of what the Gobelins have done since, however, the public knows but little. This semi-ignorance may be directly traced to the fact that, ever since its foundation, the manufactory has wrought solely for the king or for the state. Through royal vicissitudes, a great many Gobelins formerly passed into general circulation; but there has been no political upset in France since 1870, and the work of the manufactory since then has remained beyond the reach of the public and out of the auction-room. That such tapestries as are available for trade and barter are rare and, of course, highly prized is attested by the sums paid for them by eager purchasers. The same pieces that were sold for a few hundred francs at the dispersal of the collection of Louis Philippe, in 1852, now bring many thousands of dollars.

All Gobelins are not worth a thousand dollars a square foot, of course, but it must be remembered that years of skilled labor of the highest artistic character go into the making of a tapestry, and since a master-weaver will, in a year, not turn out more than five square feet of tapestry, even at the very modest salary of five hundred dollars a year, this would bring the cost up to a hundred dollars a square foot. Add to this the cost of materials, the artist's pay for painting the original picture, etc., and a square foot of tapestry, irrespective of any artistic merit whatever, represents an intrinsic value of at least two hundred dollars. The relative value of painting and tapestry is demonstrated by the price paid to Raphael by Pope Leo X for the ten panels of the Apostles—ten thousand dollars, while Peter Van Aelst, the Brussels weaver who translated them into tapestry, received a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The panels represented possibly four months of Raphael's time, while Van Aelst and twenty assistants worked for four years to produce the tapestries.

After the French Revolution, the first evidence of a return to great tapestry weaving was the decorative *ensemble* ordered in 1864 by Napoleon III for one of the reception-rooms of the Elysée. As executed from cartoons painted by Baudry, nine panels symbolized the five senses. These were nearly completed on the Gobelins' looms when the Franco-Prussian War broke out. At the close of the Commune, an incendiary fire destroyed part of the Gobelins' buildings and with them most of the work of Baudry. One panel representing the



Joan of Arc and the Constable de Richemont
Gobelin tapestry by Toudouze, Palais de Justice, Rennes



The Death of Du Guesclin

Last of the historical set of Gobelin tapestries executed, after cartoons of Toudouse, for the Palais de Justice, Rennes

sense of touch and two *dessus de porte* depicting the seasons were saved. Nothing which the manufactory has turned out in the whole course of the nineteenth century can be compared with this work. The "Sense of Touch" and the "Seasons" have been repeated since at comparatively frequent intervals, and have figured among the presents offered by the French nation to visiting potentates.

The project of decorating the *salons* of the Elysée with modern Gobelins was again taken up in 1876, with a set of nineteen panels. Besides the muses, reduced to six in number, it comprised four allegories representing pastoral, lyrical, satirical, and heroic poetry, and two panels personating Pegasus and the lyre of Apollo. Two marble vases and a third of porphyry, with two golden tripods, completed the *ensemble*. The success which had crowned Baudry and Galland encouraged the Beaux-Arts to persevere in its plan to decorate the interior of public edifices with modern Gobelins. Mazerelle, Ehrmann, Joseph Blanc, Jean Paul Laurens, Edouard Toudouze were asked to furnish cartoons for the Opéra, the Luxembourg, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Comédie Française, and the Palais de Justice at Rennes. Not all these attempts met with success. Having to ornament the staircase of the Luxembourg, for instance, the directors made the grievous mistake of commissioning eight different artists to do the work, allotting a panel to each. In order to give semblance of harmony, it had been planned to frame all these tapestries with the same border; but when the time came, it was found that they had been woven to fit the architectural bays exactly, with no allowance for borders. As a consequence, the borders had to be cut and the tapestries had to be hung unframed. This unfortunate experience bore its fruit, since it served to establish the principle that the first requisite of a decorative *ensemble* is unity of inspiration and execution.

RECENT GOBELIN TAPESTRIES

In the last twenty-five years, the Gobelins have produced four important sets, designed and woven in obedience to this formula, for the Comédie Française, by Galland; the Sessions Court of the Palais de Justice at Rennes, by Joseph Blanc; the Joan of Arc, by Jean Paul Laurens, and the

High Court of the Palais de Justice at Rennes, by Edouard Toudouze. Another important set, not yet finished, is intended for the Senate. The artist, Albert Maignan, chose his subjects, eight in number, from Ovid's "Metamorphoses." Four of the panels—"Apollo and Daphne," "Venus and Adonis," "Jupiter and Semele," and "Minerva and Arachne"—are already in place.

While all of these decorative hangings deserve commendation, the set composed and painted by Edouard Toudouze for the High Court of the Palais de Justice at Rennes so far transcends the others that it must be put in a class by itself.

Toudouze toiled six years on these models, and died without knowing himself one of the elect. "The Marriage of Anne of Brittany and Charles VIII," "The Meeting between Joan of Arc and the Constable de Richemont," "The Crowning of Nominœ," "The Death of Du Guesclin"—each is a masterpiece.

THE WORK OF GORGUET

The death of Toudouze left two of the eight panels for the Rennes court house unfinished, and chosen to execute these was Gorguet, whose "Vertumnus and Pomona" already hung in the Luxembourg. This tapestry, completed in 1899, is to a Toudouze set what a landscape is to a war pageant. The tone is one of autumnal tints and sunset effects. What particularly justified the choice of Gorguet was his mural paintings in the Salle Gothique of the Douai Hôtel de Ville. The same profusion of personages, the same richness of accouterments that distinguish Toudouze's panels, are found in the "Entry of Jean le Bon into Douai."

Another recent historical set, finished in 1911, will soon grace the walls of the Palais de Justice of Bourges. It is by Cormon and represents the Duc Jean de Berry at Bourges. Of the tapestries not purely decorative or spectacular, is a textile picture by Gustave Moreau, entitled "The Poet and the Siren," which, if weird in conception, is yet art of high order.

In addition to modern cartoons, the Gobelins have of late years executed a number of copies of ancient works. Of these might be mentioned the "Venus" of Jordaens, the "Marie de' Medici" of Rubens, and the "Venus at the Bath" of Boucher.



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

As muddy waters purify themselves in running, so had the Knight blood, coming
through unpleasant channels, finally clarified and sweetened
itself in this girl

(The Auction Block)

The Auction Block

A STORY OF STAGE LIFE AND A YOUNG GIRL'S SACRIFICE

By Rex Beach

Author of "The Spoilers," "The Ne'er-do-Well," "Rope's End," etc.

Illustrated by Charles Dana Gibson

PETER KNIGHT flung himself into the decrepit armchair beside the center-table and growled:

"Isn't that just my luck? And me a Democrat for twenty years. There's nothing in politics, Jimmy."

His son James smiled crookedly, with a languid tolerance bespeaking amusement and contempt. James prided himself upon his forbearance, and it was rarely indeed that he betrayed more than a hint of the superiority which he felt toward his parent.

"Politics is all right, provided you're a good picker," he said, with all the assurance of twenty-two, "but you fell off the wrong side of the fence, and you're sore."

"Of course I am. Wouldn't anybody be sore?"

"These country towns always go in for the reform stuff every so often. If you'd listen to me and——"

His father interrupted harshly. "Now cut that out! I don't want to go to New York, and I won't." Peter Knight tried to look forceful, but the expression did not fit his weak, complacent features. He was a plump man with red cheeks rounded by habitual good-humor; his chin was short, and beneath it were other chins, distended and sagging as if from the weight of chuckles within. When he had succeeded in fixing a look of determination upon his countenance, the result was an artificial scowl and a palpably false pout. Wearing such a front, he continued: "When I say 'no,' I mean it, and the subject is closed. I like Vale; I know everybody here, and everybody knows me."

"That's why it's time to move," said Jim.

"As long as they didn't know you, you got past. But you'll never hold another office."

"Indeed! My record's open to inspection. I made the best sheriff in——"

"Two years. Don't kid yourself, pa. Your foot slipped when the trolley line went through."

"What do you know about the trolley line?" angrily demanded Mr. Knight.

"Well—I know as much as the county knows. And I know something about the big dam, too. You got into the mud, pa, but you didn't go deep enough to find the frogs. Fogarty got his, didn't he?"

Mr. Knight breathed deep with indignation.

"Senator Fogarty is my good friend. I won't let you question his honor."

"Of course he's your friend; that's why he's fixed you for this New York job. He's not like these rubes; he remembers a good turn and blows back with another. He's a real politician."

"Department of Water Supply, Gas, and Electricity," sneered Peter. "It sounds good, but the salary is fifteen hundred a year. A clerk—at my age!"

"Say, d'you suppose Tammany men live on their salaries?" Jimmy inquired. "Wake up! This is your chance to horn into the real herd. In New York, politics is a vocation; up here, it's a vacation—everybody tries it once, like music-lessons. If you'd been hooked up with Tammany instead of the state machine, you'd have been taken care of."

"I tell you I don't like cities. It's no place to raise kids."

At this, James betrayed some irritation. "I'm of age, and Lorelei's a grown woman. If we don't get out, I'll still be a brakeman on a soda-fountain when I'm your age."

"If you'd worked hard, you'd have had an interest in the drug store now."

"Rats!"

At this juncture, Mrs. Knight, having finished the supper dishes and set her bread to rise, entered the shoddy parlor. Jim turned to her, shrugging his shoulders with an air of washing his hands of a disagreeable subject. "Pa's weakened again," he explained. "He won't go."

"Me, a clerk—at my age!" mumbled Peter.

"I've been trying to tell him that he'd get a half-nelson on Tammany inside of a year. He squeezed the sheriff's office till it squealed, and if he can pinch a dollar out of this burg, he can—"

"You shut up!" snarled Mr. Knight.

His wife spoke, for the first time, with brief conclusiveness.

"I wrote and thanked Senator Fogarty for his offer, and told him you'd accept."

"You—what?" Peter was dumfounded.

"Yes." Mrs. Knight seemed oblivious to his wrath. "We're going to make a change."

Mrs. Knight was a large woman, well advanced beyond that indefinite turning-point of middle age; in her unattractive face was none of the easy good-nature so unmistakably stamped upon her husband's. Peter J. was inherently optimistic. His head was forever hidden in a roseate aura of hopefulness and expectation. Under easy living he had grayed and fattened. His eyes were small and colorless; his cheeks full, and veined with tiny sprays of purple; his hands soft and limber. He was big-hearted in little things; in big things he was small. He told an excellent story, but never imagined one, and his laugh was hearty though insincere. Men who knew him well laughed with him, but did not endorse his notes.

His wife was of a totally different stamp, showing evidence of unusual force. Her thin lips, her clean-cut nose, betokened purpose; a pair of alert, unpleasant eyes spoke of a mental activity that was entirely lacking in her mate, and she was generally recognized as the source of what little prominence he had attained.

"Yes, we're going to make a change,"

she repeated. "I'm glad, too, for I'm tired of housework."

"There's Lorelei to help."

"You know I wouldn't let her do it."

"Afraid it would spoil her hands, eh?"

Mr. Knight snorted disdainfully. "What are hands made for, anyhow? Honest work never hurt mine."

Jim stirred and smiled; the retort upon his lips was only too obvious.

"She's too pretty," said the mother.

"You don't realize it—none of us do, but—she's beautiful. Where she gets her good looks from, I don't know."

"What's the difference? It won't hurt her to wash dishes. She wouldn't have to keep it up forever, anyhow; she can have any fellow in the county."

"Yes, and she'll marry, sure, if we stay."

Knight's colorless eyes opened. "Then what are you talking about going away to a strange place for? It ain't every girl that can have her pick."

Mrs. Knight began slowly, musingly. "You need some plain talk, Peter. I don't often tell you just what I think, but I'm going to now. You're past fifty; you've spent twenty years puttering around at politics, with business as a side issue, and what have you got to show for it? Nothing. The reformers are in at last, and you're out for good. You were always expecting something big, some fat office with big profits, but it never came. Do you know why? Because *you* aren't big; that's why. You're little, Peter; you know it, and so does the party."

The object of this address swelled pompously; but his wife ran on evenly:

"The party used you just as long as you could deliver something, but you're down and out now, and they've thrown you over. Fogarty offers to pay his debt, and I'm not going to refuse his help."

"I suppose you think you could have done better if you'd been in my place," Peter grumbled. "That's the woman of it. You kick because we're poor, and then want me to take a fifteen-hundred-dollar job."

"Bother the salary! It will keep us going as long as necessary."

"Eh?" Mr. Knight looked blank.

"I'm thinking of Lorelei. She's going to give us our chance."

"Lorelei?"

"Yes. You wonder why I've never let her spoil her hands—why I've scrimped to

give her pretty clothes, and taught her to take care of her figure, and made her go out with young people. Well, I knew what I was doing; it was part of her schooling. She's going to do for us what you never have been and never will be able to do, Peter Knight. She's going to make us rich. But she can't do it in Vale."

"Ma's right," declared James. "New York's the place for pretty women; the town is full of them."

"If it's full of pretty women, what chance has she got?" queried Peter. "She can't break into society on my fifteen hundred—"

"She won't need to. She can go on the stage."

"Good Lord! What makes you think she can act?"

"Do you remember that Miss Donald who stopped at Myrtle Lodge last summer? She's an actress."

"No!" Mr. Knight was amazed.

"She told me a good deal about the show business. She said Lorelei wouldn't have the least bit of trouble getting a position. She gave me a note to a manager, and I sent him Lorelei's photograph. He wrote back that he'd give her a place."

"Really?"

"Yes; he's looking for pretty girls with good figures. His name is Bergman."

Jim broke in eagerly. "You've heard of Bergman's Revues, pa. We saw one last summer, remember? He's a big fellow."

"That show? Why, that was—rotten. It isn't a very decent life, either."

"Don't worry about sis," advised Jim. "She can take care of herself, and she'll grab a millionaire, sure—with her looks. Other girls are doing it every day—why not her? Ma's got the right idea."

Impassively, Mrs. Knight resumed her argument. "New York is where the money is—and the women that go with money. It's the market-place. The stage advertises a pretty girl and gives her chances to meet rich men. Here in Vale there's nobody with money, and, besides, people know us. The Stevens girls have been nasty to Lorelei all winter."

At this intelligence Mr. Knight burst forth indignantly, "They're putting on a lot of airs since the Interurban went through, but Ben Stevens forgets who helped him get the franchise—"

"Bergman writes," continued Mrs.

Knight, "that Lorelei wouldn't have to go on the road at all, if she didn't care to."

Peter Knight pinched his full red lips into a pucker and stared speculatively at his wife. It was not often that she openly showed her hand to him.

"It seems like an awful long chance," he said.

"Not so long, perhaps, as you think," his wife assured him. "Anyhow, it's our *only* chance."

"Have you talked to her about it?"

"A little. She'll do anything we ask."

The three were still buried in discussion when Lorelei appeared at the door.

"I'm going over to Mabel's," she paused to say. "I'll be back early, mother."

In Peter Knight's eyes, as he gazed at his daughter, there was something akin to shame; but Jim evinced only a hard, calculating appraisal. Both men inwardly acknowledged that the mother had spoken less than half the truth, for the girl was extravagantly, bewitchingly attractive. Her face and form would have been noticeable anywhere, and under any circumstances; but now, in contrast with the unmodified homeliness of her parents and brother, her comeliness was almost startling. The others seemed to harmonize with their drab surroundings, with the dull, unattractive house and its furnishings, but Lorelei was in violent opposition to everything about her. Neither in speech nor in look did she show a trace of her father's fatuous commonplaceness, and she gave no sign of her mother's coldly calculating disposition. Equally the girl differed from her brother, for Jim was anemic, underdeveloped, sallow; his only mark of distinction being his bright and impudent eye—while she was full-blooded, healthy, and clean. Splendidly distinctive, from her crown of warm amber hair to her shapely, slender feet, it seemed that all the hopes, all the aspirations, all the longings of bygone generations of Knights had flowered in her. As muddy waters purify themselves in running, so had the Knight blood, coming through unpleasant channels, finally clarified and sweetened itself in this girl. In the color of her eyes she resembled neither parent. Mrs. Knight's were close-set and hard; Peter's, shallow, indefinite, weak. Lorelei's were limpid and of a twilight blue. Her single paternal inheritance was a smile perhaps a trifle too ready and too meaning-



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

At this juncture, Mrs. Knight entered the shoddy parlor. Jim turned to her, shrugging his shoulders with go." "Me, a clerk—at my age!" mumbled Peter. His wife spoke, for the first



an air of washing his hands of a disagreeable subject. "Pa's weakened again," he explained. "He won't time, with brief conclusiveness "I wrote and thanked Senator Fogarty for his offer"

less. Yet it was a pleasant smile, indicative of a disposition toward courtesy, if not self-depreciation.

But there all resemblance ceased. Lorelei Knight was mysteriously different from her kin; she might almost have sprung from a different strain, and, except as one of those "throwbacks" which sometimes occur in a mediocre family, she was inexplicable. Simple living had made her strong, yet she remained exquisite.

In the doorway she hesitated an instant, favoring the group with her shadowy, impersonal smile. She came forward and rested a hand upon her father's thinly-haired, bullet head. Peter reached up and took it in his own moist palm.

"We were just talking about you," he said.

"Yes?"

"Your ma thinks I'd better accept that New York offer on your account."

"On mine? I don't understand."

Peter stroked the hand in his clasp.

"She thinks you should see the world and make something of yourself."

"That would be nice." Lorelei's lips were still parted, as she turned to her mother.

"You'd like the city, wouldn't you?" Mrs. Knight inquired.

"Why, yes; I suppose so."

"We're poor—poorer than we've ever been. Jim will have to work, and so will you."

"I'll do whatever I can, of course, but—I don't know how to do anything."

"We'll see to that. Now, run along, dearie." When she had gone, Peter gave a grunt of conviction.

"She *is* pretty," he acknowledged, "and you certainly dress her well. She'd ought to make a good actress."

Jim echoed him enthusiastically. "Pretty? I'll bet Bernhardt's got nothing on her for looks. She'll have a brownstone hut on Fifth Avenue and an air-tight limousine one of these days; see if she don't."

"When do you plan to leave?" faltered the father.

Mrs. Knight answered with some satisfaction, "Rehearsals commence in May."

II

MR. CAMPBELL POPE was a cynic. He had cultivated a superb contempt for those beliefs which other people cherish. He

rejoiced in an open rebellion against convention, and manifested this hostility in an exaggerated carelessness of dress and manner. It was perhaps his habit of thought, as much as anything else, that had made him a dramatic critic, but it was a knack for keen analysis and a natural, caustic wit that had raised him to eminence in his field. Outwardly he was a sloven and a misanthrope; inwardly he was simple and rather boyish, but years of experience in a box-office, then as advance man and publicity agent for a circus, and finally as a metropolitan reviewer, had destroyed his illusions and soured his taste for theatrical life. His column was widely read; his name was known; as a prophet he was uncanny—hence managers treated him with a gingerly courtesy not always quite sincere.

Most men attain success through love of their work; Mr. Pope had become an eminent critic because of his hatred for the drama and all things dramatic. Nor was he any more enamored of journalism, being, in truth, by nature bucolic, but after trying many occupations and failing in all of them, he had returned to his desk after each excursion into other fields. First-night audiences knew him now and had come to look for his thin, sharp features. His shapeless, wrinkled suit that resembled a sleeping-bag, his flannel shirt, always tieless and frequently collarless, were considered attributes of genius; and finding New York to be amazingly gullible, he took a certain delight in accentuating his eccentricities. At especially prominent *premières*, he affected a sweater underneath his coat, but that was his nearest approach to formal evening dress.

Owing to the dearth of new productions this summer, Pope had undertaken a series of magazine articles descriptive of the reigning theatrical beauties, and while he detested women in general and the painted favorites of Broadway in particular, he had forced himself to write the common laudatory stuff which the public demanded. Only once had he given free rein to his inclinations and written with a poisoned pen. To-night, however, as he entered the stage door of Bergman's Circuit Theater, it was with a different intent.

Rogan, the stage-door tender, better known since his vaudeville days as "the Judge," answered his greeting with a lugubrious shake of a bald head.

"I'm a sick man, Mr. Pope. Same old trouble."

"Mm—m; kidneys, isn't it?"

"No. Rheumatism. I'm a beehive swarmin' with pains."

"To be sure. It's Hemphill, the doorman at the Columbus, who has the floating kidney. I paid for his operation."

"Hemphill! Operation! Ha!" "The Judge" cackled, in a voice hoarse from alcoholic excesses. "He bilked you, Mr. Pope. He's the guy that put the kid in kidney. There's nothing wrong with him." "The Judge" leaned forward, and a strong odor of whisky enveloped the caller. "Could you slip me four bits for some liniment?"

The critic smiled. "There's a dollar, Rogan. Try Scotch for a change. It's better for you than these cheap blends. And don't breathe toward a lamp or you'll ignite."

"The Judge" laughed wheezingly. "I do take a drop now and then."

"A drop? You'd better take a tumble or Bergman will let you out."

"See here; you know all the managers, Mr. Pope. Can't you find a job for a swell dame?" "the Judge" inquired anxiously.

"Who is she?"

"Lottie Devine. She's out with the 'Peach-Blossom Girls.'"

"Lottie Devine. Why, she's your wife, isn't she?"

"Sure, and playing the 'wheel,' when she belongs in musical comedy. She dances as good as she did when we worked together, Mr. Pope. Can't you place her?"

"She's a trifle old, I'm afraid."

"Huh! She wigs up a lot better'n some of the squabs in this troupe. Believe me, she'd fit any chorus."

"Why don't you ask Bergman?"

Mr. Rogan shook his hairless head. "He's dippy on 'types.' This show's full of 'em: real blondes, real brunettes, bold and dashin' ones, tall and statelies, blushers, shrinkers, laughers, and sadlings. He won't stand for make-up; he wants 'em with the dew on. They've got to look natural for Bergman. That's some of 'em now." He nodded toward a group of young, fresh-checked girls who had entered the stage door and were hurrying down the hall.

"I've come to interview one of Bergman's 'types'—that new beauty, Miss Knight. Is she here yet?"

"Sure. Her and the back drop, too.

She carries the old woman for scenery."

Mr. Rogan took the caller's card and shuffled away, leaving Pope to watch the stream of performers as they entered and made for their quarters.

It was no novel sight to the reviewer, whose theatrical apprenticeship had been thorough, yet it never failed to awaken his deepest cynicism. Somewhere within him was a puritanical streak, and he still cherished youthful memories. He reflected, now, that it was he who had laid the foundation for the popularity of the girl he had come to interview; for he had picked her out of the chorus of the preceding revue and commented so enthusiastically upon her beauty that this season had witnessed her advancement to a speaking part. But he had never met the girl herself, and he wondered idly what effect success had had upon her. A total absence of scandal had argued against any previous theatrical experience.

Meanwhile, he exchanged greetings with the star—a clear-eyed man with the face of a scholar and the limbs of an athlete. He had studied for the law—this star; he had the drollest legs in the business, and his salary exceeded that of a Supreme Court justice. They were talking when Mr. Rogan returned to tell the interviewer that he would be received.

Pope followed to the next floor, and entered a brightly lighted, overheated dressing-room, where Lorelei and her mother were waiting. It was a glaring, stuffy cubby-hole, ventilated by means of the hall door, and a tiny window opening from the lavatory at the rear. Along the sides ran mirrors, beneath which was fixed a wide make-up shelf. From the ceiling depended several unshaded incandescent globes which flooded the place with a desert heat and radiance. An attempt had been made to give the room at least a semblance of coolness by hanging an attractively figured cretonne over the entrance and over the wardrobe hooks fixed in the rear wall, but the result was hardly successful. The same material had been utilized to cover the shelves which were littered with a bewildering assortment of make-up tins, cold-cream cans, rouge- and powder-boxes, whitening-bottles, wig-blocks, and the multifarious disordered accumulations of a dressing-room. The walls were half hidden behind photographs, impaled upon pins,

like entomological specimens. Photographs were thrust into the mirror frames; they were propped against the heaps of tins and boxes, or hidden beneath the confusion of toilet articles. But the collection was not limited to this variety of specimen. One section of the wall was devoted to telegraph- and cable-forms, bearing messages of felicitation at the opening of "The Revue of 1913." Some were addressed to Lorelei Knight, others to Lilas Lynn, her room-mate.

Pope found Lorelei completely dressed, in expectation of his arrival. She wore the white-and-silver first-act costume of the Fairy Princess. Both she and her mother were plainly nonplused at the appearance of their caller; but Mrs. Knight recovered quickly from the shock, and said agreeably:

"Lorelei was frightened to death at your message yesterday. She was almost afraid to let you interview her after what you wrote about Adorée Demorest."

Pope shrugged. "Your daughter is altogether different to the star of the Palace Garden, Mrs. Knight. Demorest trades openly upon her notoriety, and—I don't like bad women. New York never would have taken her up if she hadn't been advertised as the wickedest woman in Europe, for she can neither act, sing, nor dance. However, she's become the rage, so I had to include her in my series of articles. Now, Miss Knight has made a legitimate success, as far as she has gone."

He turned to the girl herself, who was smiling at him as she had smiled since his entrance. He did not wonder at the prominence her beauty had brought her, for even at this close range, her make-up could not disguise her loveliness.

"There's nothing 'legitimate' about musical shows," she told him, in reply to his last remark, "and I can't act or sing or dance as well as Miss Demorest."

"You don't need to; just let the public rest its eyes on you, and it will be satisfied—anyhow, it should be. Has success turned your head?"

Mrs. Knight answered for her daughter. "Lorelei has too much sense for that. She succeeded easily, but she isn't spoiled."

Then in response to a question by Pope, Lorelei told him something of her experience. "We're up-state people, you know. Mr. Bergman was looking for types and I seemed to suit, so I got an engagement at

once. The newspapers began to mention me, and when he produced this show he had the part of the Fairy Princess written in for me. I don't do much except wear the gowns and speak a few lines."

"You're one of the principals," her mother said chidingly.

"I suppose you're ambitious?" Pope put in.

Again the mother answered: "Indeed she is, and she's bound to succeed. Of course she hasn't had any experience to speak of, but there's more than one manager that's got his eye on her." The listener inwardly cringed. "She could be starved, easy, and she will be, too, another season."

"Then you must be studying hard, Miss Knight?" Lorelei shook her head.

"Not even voice culture?"

"No."

"Nor dancing? Nor acting?"

"No."

"She has so little time. You've no idea how popular she is," twittered Mrs. Knight.

Pope fancied the girl herself flushed under his inquiring eye; at any rate, her gaze wavered, and she seemed vexed by her mother's explanation. He, too, resented Mrs. Knight's share in the conversation. He did not like the elder woman's face, nor her voice, nor her manner, and found himself marveling at the dissimilarity of the two women.

"Of course, a famous beauty does meet a lot of people," he said. "Tell me what you think of our flourishing little city and our New York men."

But Lorelei raised a slender hand.

"Not for worlds! Besides, you're making fun of me, now. I was afraid to see you, and I'd feel terribly if you printed anything I really told you. Good interviewers never do that. They come and talk about nothing, then go away and put the most brilliant things into your mouth. You are considered a very dangerous person, Mr. Pope."

"You're thinking of my story about that Demorest woman, again," he laughed.

"Is she as bad as you described her?"

"I don't know, never having met the lady. I wouldn't humiliate myself by a personal interview, so I built a story on the Broadway gossip. Inasmuch as she goes in for notoriety, I gave her some of the best I had in stock. Her photographer did the rest."

The door curtains parted, and Lilas Lynn,

a slender, black-eyed young woman entered. She greeted Pope cordially, as she removed her hat and handed it to the woman who acted as dresser for the two occupants of the room.

"I'm late, as usual," she said, "but don't leave on my account." She disappeared into the lavatory and emerged a moment later in a combing-jacket. Seating herself before her own mirrors, she dove into a cosmetic can and vigorously applied a priming coat to her features, while the dresser drew her hair back and secured it tightly with a wig band. "Lorelei's got her nerve to talk to you after the panning you gave Demorest," she continued. "Aren't you ashamed of yourself to strike a defenseless star?"

Pope nodded. "I am, and I'm ashamed of my entire sex when I hear of them flocking to the Palace Garden just to see a woman who has nothing to distinguish her but a reputation for vileness."

"Did you see the crown jewels—the king's *cabochon* rubies?" Lorelei asked.

"Only from the front. I dare say they're as counterfeit as she is."

Miss Lynn turned, revealing a countenance as shiny as that of an Eskimo belle.

"Oh, they're real enough. I got that straight."

Campbell Pope scoffed.

"Isn't it true about the King of Seldovia? Didn't she wreck his throne?" eagerly queried Mrs. Knight.

"I never met the king, and I haven't examined his throne. But, you know, kings can do no wrong, and thrones are easily mended."

But Mrs. Knight was insistent. Her eyes glittered. "They say she draws two thousand a week, and won't go to supper with a man for less than five hundred dollars. She says if fellows want to be seen in public with her, they'll have to pay for it, and she's right. Of course, she's terribly bad; but you must admit she's done mighty well for herself."

"We'll have a chance to see her to-night," announced Lilas. "Mr. Hammon is giving a big supper to some of his friends and we're going—Lorelei and I. Demorest is down for her *Danse de Nuit*. They say it's the limit."

"Hammon, the steel man?" queried the critic curiously.

"Sure. There's only one Hammon. But nix on the newspaper story: this is a private affair."

"Never let us speak ill of a poor Pittsburgh millionaire," laughed Pope. "Scandal must never darken the soot of that village." He turned as Slosson, the press-agent of the show, entered.

"Here are the new pictures of Lorelei for your story, old man," Mr. Slosson said. "Bergman will appreciate the boost for one of his girls. Help yourself to those you want. If you need any more stuff, I'll supply it. Blushing country lass—just out of the alfalfa belt—first appearance on any stage—instantaneous hit, and a record for pulchritude in an aggregation where the homeliest member is a Helen of Troy. Say! Bergman can certainly pick 'em, can't he? I'll frame it for a special cop at the back door, detailed to hold off the matrimony squad of society youths, if you can use it."

"Don't go to the trouble," Pope hastily deprecated. "I know the story. Now I'm going to leave and let Miss Lynn dress."

"Don't go on my account," urged Lilas. "This room is like a subway station, and I've got so I could change in Bryant Park, at noon, and never shock a policeman."

"You won't say anything mean about us?" Mrs. Knight implored. "In this business, a girl's reputation is all she has."

"I promise." Pope held out his hand to Lorelei, and, as she took it, her lips parted in her ever-ready smile.

"Nice girl, that," the critic remarked, as he and Slosson descended the stairs.

"Which one—Lorelei, Lilas, or the female gorilla?"

"How did she come to choose *that* for a mother?" muttered Pope.

"One of nature's inscrutable mysteries. But wait. Have you seen brother Jim?"

"No. Who's he?"

"His mother's son. Need we say more! He's a great help to the family, for he keeps 'em from getting too proud over Lorelei. He sells introductions to his sister."

Campbell Pope's exclamation was lost in a babble of voices, as a bevy of "Swimming Girls" descended from the enchanted regions above and scurried out upon the stage. Through the double curtain the orchestra could be faintly heard; a voice was crying, "Places."

"Some soul-kissers with this troupe, eh?" remarked Slosson.

"Yes. Bergman has made a fortune out



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

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164 She succeeded easily, but she isn't spoiled." Then



turned your head?" Mrs. Knight answered for her daughter. "Lorelei has too much sense for that. Lorelei told him something of her experience

of this kind of show. He's a friend to the 'tired business man.'

"Speaking of the weary Wall Street workers, there will be a dozen of our ribbon winners at that Hammon supper to-night. Twelve 'Bergman Beauties.' Twelve, count 'em. Any time you want to pull off a classy party for some of your bachelor friends, let me know, and I'll supply the dames—at one hundred dollars a head—and guarantee their manners."

"One hundred? Last season, a girl was lucky to get fifty dollars as a banquet favor, but—the cost of living rises nightly."

"Yes, and that's exclusive of the regulation favors. There's a good story in this party if you could get the men's names."

Pope's thin lip curled.

"I write theatrical stuff," he said shortly, "because I have to, not because I like to. I try to keep it reasonably clean."

Slosson was instantly apologetic. "Oh, I don't mean there's anything wrong about this affair. Hammon is entertaining a crowd of other steel men, and a stag supper is either dull or devilish, so he has invited a good-looking partner for each male guest. It'll be thoroughly refined, and it's being done every night."

"I know it is. Tell me: is Lorelei Knight a regular—er—frequenter of these affairs?"

"Sure. It's part of the graft."

"I see."

"She has to piece out her salary like the other girls. Why, her whole family is around her neck—mother, brother, and father. Old man Knight was run over by a taxi-cab last summer. It didn't hurt the machine, but he's got a broken back or something. Too bad, it wasn't brother Jimmy. You must meet him, by the way. I never heard of Lorelei's doing anything really—bad."

For the moment, Campbell Pope made no reply. Meanwhile, a great wave of singing flooded the regions at the back of the theater. When he did speak, it was with unusual bitterness.

"It's the rottenest business in the world, Slosson. Two years ago she was a country girl; now she's a Broadway Belle. How long will she last, d'you think?"

"She's too beautiful to last long," agreed the press-agent soberly, "especially now that the wolves are on her trail. But the danger isn't so much from the people she meets with as the people she eats with. That

family of hers would drive any girl to the limit. They intend to cash in on her."

"And they will, too. She can have her choice of the wealthy rounders."

"Don't get me wrong," Slosson hastened to qualify. "She's square, understand?"

"Of course. 'Object, matrimony.' It's the old story, and her mother will see to the ring and the orange blossoms. But what's the difference, after all, Slosson? It'll be hell for her, and a sale to the highest bidder, either way."

"Queer little gink," the press-agent reflected, as he returned to the front of the house. "I wish he wore stiff collars; I'd like to take him home for dinner."

III

In his summary of Lorelei's present life, Slosson had not been far wrong. Many changes had come to the Knights during the past two years, changes of habit, of thought, and of outlook. The entire family had found it necessary to alter their system of living. But it was in the girl that the changes showed most. When Mrs. Knight had forecast an immediate success for her daughter, she had spoken with the wisdom of a Cassandra. Bergman had taken one look at Lorelei, upon their first meeting, then his glance had quickened. She had proved to have at least an average singing voice; her figure needed no comment. Her inexperience had been the strongest argument in her favor, since Bergman's shows were famous for their new faces. The result was that he signed her promptly, and mother and daughter had walked out of his office quite unconscious of having accomplished the unusual.

Lorelei took naturally to the work, finding it more like play; and being quite free from girlish timidity, she felt no stage fright, even upon her first appearance. Her recognition had followed quickly—it was impossible to hide such perfection of loveliness as hers—and the publicity pleased her. In due course, rival managers began to make offers, which Mrs. Knight, rising nobly to the first test of her business ability, used as levers to raise her daughter's salary and to pry out of Bergman a five-year contract.

Thus it was that, without conscious effort, without even a proof of merit beyond her appearance, Lorelei had arrived at the

point where further advancement depended upon study and hard work; but since these formed no part of the family program, she remained idle while Mrs. Knight and Jim arranged so many demands upon her time that she had no leisure for serious endeavor, even had she desired it. Proficiency in stage-craft of any sort comes only at the expense of peonage, and this girl was being groomed solely for matrimony.

The principals who topped the Bergman bill were artists—men and women who had climbed through years of patient effort. Toward their subordinates they maintained an aloofness that is peculiar to the show business. They moved in a world apart from the chorus: the two classes impinged briefly, eight times a week, but outside the theater, they never saw each other. Even Labaudie, the doll-like *danseuse*, looked down upon Lorelei and Lilas almost as she looked down upon the members of her ballet. Out of all the big company, there were perhaps a half-dozen chorus men and women who had eyes definitely fixed upon a stage career; the rest, like Lorelei and Lilas, regarded the work simply as an easy means of livelihood.

The theatrical profession is peculiar to itself. It is a world with customs, habits, and ambitions differing from those of any other sphere. That division of stage life to which Lorelei Knight belonged—that army of men and women from shows like Bergman's—constitutes a still more distinctive community—a community moreover, that is characteristic of New York alone. Its code is of its own making; its habits of life are as individual as its figures of speech. Although, at first, all this bewildered the country girl, at length she had come to adopt the new ways as a matter of course. She had learned how to reap the fruits of popularity, how to take without giving, how to profit without sacrifice, and, under her mother's influence, she was not allowed to forget what she had learned.

With the support of the family entirely upon her shoulders, she had been driven to many shifts in order to stretch her salary to livable proportions. Peter was a total burden, and Jim either refused or was unable to contribute toward the common fund, while the mother devoted her time almost solely to managing Lorelei's affairs. Presents were showered upon the girl, and these

Mrs. Knight converted into cash. Conspicuous stage characters are always welcome at the prominent cafés; hence Lorelei never had to pay for food or drink when alone, and, when escorted, she received a commission on the money spent. She was well paid for posing: advertisements of toilet articles, face creams, dentifrices, and the like, especially if accompanied by testimonials, yielded something. In the commercial exploitation of her daughter, Mrs. Knight developed something like genius. She arranged for paid interviews and special beauty articles in the Sunday supplements; she saw to it that Lorelei's features became identified with certain makes of biscuits, petticoats, chewing-gum, chocolate, cameras, short-vamp shoes, and bath tubs. But of all the so-called "grafts" open to handsome girls in her business, the quickest and best returns came from prodigal entertainers like Jarvis Hammon.

As Lorelei and her companion left their taxi-cabs and entered Proctor's Hotel, shortly before midnight, they were met by a head waiter and shown into an ornate, ivory-and-gold elevator, which lifted them noiselessly to an upper floor. They made their exit into a deep-carpeted hall, at the end of which two splendid creatures in the panoply of German field-marshal's stood guard over one of the smaller banquet-rooms. Hammon himself greeted the girls when they had surrendered their wraps, and, after his introduction to Lorelei, engaged Lilas in earnest conversation.

Lorelei watched him curiously. She saw a powerfully built, gray-haired man, whose vigor age had not impaired. In face, he was fifty years old; in body, he was much less. He was the typical forceful New York man of affairs, carefully groomed, perhaps a little inclined to stoutness. By this time millionaires had lost their novelty for the girl. She had met some who were more distinguished in appearance than this man, but never one who seemed possessed of more nervous energy and virility. Playfully he pinched Lilas' cheek, then turned with a smile to say:

"You'll pardon us for whispering, won't you, Miss Knight? You see, Lilas got up this little party, and I've been waiting to consult her about some of the details. Of course she was late, as usual. However—" he ran an admiring eye over the two girls—

"the time wasn't wasted, I see. My! How lovely you both look!"

Taking an arm of each, he swept them toward a reception-room from which issued noisy laughter.

Perhaps twenty men in evening dress and as many elaborately gowned young women were gossiping and smoking as the last comers appeared. Some one raised a vigorous complaint at the host's tardiness, but Hammon laughed a rejoinder; then gave a signal, whereupon folding doors at the end of the room were thrown back. From within an orchestra struck up a popular rag-time air, and those nearest the banquet-hall moved toward it.

Hammon was introducing two of his friends—one a languid, middle-aged man, who was curled up in a deep chair with a cigarette between his fingers; the other, a large-featured person with a rumbling voice. The men had been arguing earnestly, oblivious to the confusion around them, but now the former dropped his cigarette, uncoiled his long form, and rising, bowed courteously. His appearance was prepossessing, and Lorelei breathed a thanksgiving as she took his arm.

Hammon clapped the other gentleman upon the shoulder, crying: "The rail market will take care of itself until tomorrow, Hannibal. What is more to the point, I saw your supper partner flirting with with 'Handsome Dan' Avery. Better find her quick."

Lorelei recognized the deep-voiced man as Hannibal C. Wharton, one of the dominant figures in the steel syndicate. She knew him instantly from his newspaper pictures. The man beside her, however, was a stranger, and she raised her eyes to his with some curiosity. He was studying her with manifest admiration.

"It is a pleasure to meet a celebrity like you, Miss Knight," he murmured. "All New York is at your feet, I understand. I'm deeply indebted to Hammon."

"Oh, don't be hasty. You may dislike me furiously before the evening is over. He does things in a magnificent way, doesn't he? I'm sure this is going to be a splendid party."

As they entered the banquet-hall, she gave a little cry of pleasure, for it was evident that Hammon, noted as he was for a lavish expenditure, had outdone himself this time. The whole room had been transformed into

a bower of roses. Great, climbing bushes, heavy with blooms, masses of cool, green ivy hid the walls from floor to ceiling, and were supported upon cunningly wrought trellises, through which hidden lights glowed softly. In certain nooks gleamed marble statuettes, so placed as to heighten the effect of space and to carry out the idea of a Roman garden.

The table—a horseshoe of silver and white, of glittering plate and sparkling cut glass—faced a rustic stage which occupied one end of the room. Occupying the inner arc of the half-circle was a wide but shallow stone fountain, upon the surface of which floated large-leaved Egyptian pond-lilies. Fat-bellied goldfish with filmy fins, and tails like iridescent wedding-trains, propelled themselves indolently about. Two dimpled Cupids strained at a marble cornucopia, out of which trickled a stream of water, its whisper drowned, now, by the noisy admiration of the guests.

But the surprising feature of the decorating scheme was not apparent at first glance. Through the bewildering riot of greenery had been woven an almost invisible netting, and the space behind formed a prison for birds and butterflies. Where they had come from or at what expense they had been procured, it was impossible to conceive. But, disturbed by the commotion, the feathered creatures twittered and fluttered against the netting in a panic which drew attention to them, even if it did not wholly convey the illusion of a woodland scene. As for the butterflies, no artificial light could deceive them, and they clung with closed wings to leaves and branches, only now and then displaying their full glory in a sleepy protest. There were scores, hundreds of them. A strident shriek sounded as a gorgeously caparisoned peacock preened himself; others were discovered here and there, brilliant-hued specimens, voicing shrill indignation.

"How—*beautiful!*" gasped Lorelei. "But—the poor little things are frightened." She looked up to find her companion staring in Hammon's direction, with an expression of peculiar, derisive amusement.

Hammon was the center of an admiring group; congratulations were being hurled at him from every hand. At his side was Lilas Lynn, very dark, very striking, very expensively gowned, and elaborately jeweled. The room was dining with the

strains of the invisible orchestra and the vocal uproar; topping the confusion came shrieks from the excitable peacocks; the wild birds twittered and beat themselves affrightedly against the netting.

Becoming conscious of Lorelei's gaze, her escort looked down, showing his teeth in a grin that was not of pleasure.

"You like it?" he asked.

"It's beautiful; but—the extravagance is almost criminal."

"Don't tell me how many starving newsboys or how many poor families the cost of this supper would support for a year. I hate poor people. I like to see 'em starve. If you fed them this year, they'd starve next; so—what's the difference? Nevertheless, Jarvis *has* surprised me." He paused, and his eyes, as he stared again at the steel magnate, were mocking. "You'll admit it was a dazzling idea—coming from a rolling-mill boss. Now for the ortolans and the humming-birds' tongues. Prepare to have your palate tickled with a feather when your appetite flags."

"That's what the Romans did, isn't it?"

"Ah, you are a student as well as an artist, Miss Knight."

"I thought you were going to be pleasant, but you're not, are you?" Lorelei was smiling fixedly.

"No; quite the opposite. Thank God, I'm a dyspeptic!"

"Then why did you come here?"

"Why did those birds come? Why did you come?"

"Oh, we—the birds and I—are merely decorations—something to add to the rich man's gaiety. But I'm afraid you don't intend to have a good time, Mr.—" They had found their places at the table, and Lorelei's escort was seating her. "I didn't catch your name when we were introduced."

"Nor I," said he, taking his place beside her. "It sounded like Rice Curry or some other damnable dish, but it's really Merkle—John T. Merkle."

"Ah! You're a banker. Aren't you pretty—reckless, confessing your rank, as it were?"

"I'm a bachelor—also an invalid and an insomniac. You couldn't bring me any more trouble than I have."

"You *are* unpleasant."

"I'm famous for it. Being the only bachelor present, I claim the privilege of free speech." Again he looked toward

Hammon, and this time he frowned. "From indications, I'll soon have company, however."

"Indeed. Is there talk of a divorce, there?" She inclined her head in the host's direction.

Merkle retorted acidly: "My dear child, don't try to act the *ingénue*. You're in the same show as Miss Lynn, and you must know what's going on. This sort of thing can't continue indefinitely, for Mrs. Hammon is very much alive, to say nothing of her daughters. I dare say they'll hear about this supper, which won't improve conditions at home. Now, we both had to come to this Oriental orgy, and since neither of us enjoy it, let's be natural, at least. I haven't slept lately, and I'm not patient enough to be polite."

"It's a bargain. I'll try to be as disagreeable as you are," said Lorelei; and Mr. Merkle signified his prompt acquiescence. He lit a huge monogrammed cigarette, pushed aside his *hors d'œuvres*, and reluctantly turned down his array of wine-glasses, one by one.

"Can't eat, can't drink, can't sleep," he grumbled. "Stewed prunes and rice for my portion. Waiter, bring me a bottle of vichy, and when it's gone, bring me another."

The diners had arranged themselves by now; the supper had begun. Owing to the nature of the affair, there was a complete absence of the stiffness usual at formal banquets, and, since the women were present in quite the same capacity as the performers who were hired to appear later on the stage, they did not allow the moments to drag. A bohemian spirit prevailed: the ardor of the men, lashed on by laughter, coquetry and smiles, rose quickly; wine flowed, and a general intimacy began. The talk flew back and forth along the rim of the rose-strewn semicircle.

IV

LORELEI turned from the man on her left who had regaled her with an endless story, the point of which had sent the teller into hiccoughs of laughter, and said to John Merkle:

"I'm glad I'm with you to-night. I don't like drinking men."

"Can a girl in your position afford preferences?" he inquired tartly.

"All women are extravagant. I have preferences, even if I *can't* afford them. If you were a tippler instead of a plain grouch, I could tell you precisely how you'd act and what you'd talk about as the evening goes on. First, you'd be gallant and attentive; then you'd forget me and talk business with Mr. Wharton—he's nearest you. About that time, I'd begin to learn the real names of these lords of finance. After that you'd become interested in my future. That's always the worst period. Once I'd made you realize that you meant nothing in my life and that my future was provided for, you'd tell me stories about your family—how your wife is an invalid, how Tom is at Yale, how Susie is coming out in the autumn, and how you really had no idea ladies were to be present to-night or you'd never have risked coming. Finally, you'd confess that you were naturally impulsive, generous, and affectionate, and merely lacked the encouragement of a kindred spirit like me to become a terrible cut-up. Then you'd insist upon dancing. I'd die if I had to teach you the tango."

Mr. Merkle grunted, "So would I."

She smiled sweetly. "You see we're both unpleasant people."

Merkle meditated in silence, while she attacked her food with a healthy, youthful appetite that awoke his envy.

"I suppose you see a lot of this sort of thing?" he at length suggested.

"There's something of the kind nearly every night. This party isn't as bad as some, for the very reason that most of the men are from out of town, and it's a bit of a novelty to them. But there's a crowd of regular New Yorkers—the younger men about town—" She paused significantly. "I accepted one invitation from them. It was quite enough."

"I've traveled some," observed Merkle, "but this city is getting to be the limit."

Lorelei nodded her amber head. "There's only one Paris, after all, and that's New York. Don't laugh: I read that. We girls remember all the clever things we hear and use them. Do you see the young person in black and white, with the red-nosed man—the one who looks as if he were smelling a rose? Well, she's in our company, and she's very popular at these parties because she's so witty. As a matter of fact, she memorizes the jokes in all the funny papers and springs them

as her own. Her men friends say she's too original to be in the show business."

The meal grew noisier; the orchestra interspersed sensuous melodies from the popular successes with the tantalizing rag-time airs that had set the city to swinging. Silent-footed attendants deposited tissue-covered packages before the guests. There was a flutter of excitement as the women began to examine their favors.

"What is it?" Merkle inquired, leaning toward Lorelei.

"The new saddle-bag purse. See? It's very Frenchy. Gold fittings—and a coin-purse and card-case inside. See the monogram? I'm going to keep this."

"Don't you keep all your gifts?"

"Not the expensive ones. Lilas picked these out for Mr. Hammon, and they're exquisite. We share the same dressing-room, you know."

Merkle regarded her with a sudden new interest. "You and she dress together?"

"Yes."

"Then—I dare say you're close friends?"

"We're close enough—in that room, but scarcely friends. What did you get?"

He unrolled the package at his plate.

"A gold safety razor—evidently a warning not to play with edged tools. I wonder if Miss Lynn bought one for Jarvis."

"Now why did you say that," Lorelei asked quickly, "and why did you ask if she and I were friends?"

The man leaned closer, saying in a voice that did not carry above the clamor:

"I suppose you know she's making a fool of him. I suppose you realize what it means when a woman of her stamp gets a man with money in her power. You must know all there is to know from the outside. It occurred to me that you might also know about the inside of the affair. Do you?"

"I'm afraid not. All I've heard is the common gossip."

"There's a good deal here that doesn't show on the surface. That woman is a menace to a great many people, of whom I happen to be one."

"You speak as if she were a dangerous character, and as if she had deliberately entangled him," Lorelei said defensively. "As a matter of fact, she did nothing of the sort. She avoided him as long as she could, but he forced his attentions upon her. He's a man who refuses defeat. Men of his wealth can do anything, you know."

Sometimes I think—but it's none of my business."

"What do you sometimes think?"

"That she hates him."

"Nonsense."

"I know she did at first. I don't wonder that she makes him pay, now. It's according to her code, and the code of this business."

"I can't believe she—dislikes him."

"He may have won her finally, but at first she refused his gifts, refused even to meet him."

"She had scruples?"

"No more than the rest of us, I presume. She gave her two weeks' notice because he annoyed her, but before the time was up, Bergman took a hand. He sent for her one evening, and when she went down, there was Mr. Hammon, too. When she came up-stairs she was hysterical."

"Curious," murmured the man. "What did she say?"

"Oh, nothing connected. She called him every kind of a monster, accused him of every crime from murder to——"

"Murder!" The banker started.

"He had made a long fight to beat her down, and she was unstrung. She seemed to have a queer physical aversion to him."

"Humph! She's got nobly over *that*."

"I've told you this because you seemed to think she's to blame, when it is all Mr. Hammon's doing."

"It's a peculiar situation—very. You've interested me. But the man himself is peculiar, extraordinary. You can't draw a proper line on his conduct without knowing the circumstances of his home life, and, in fact, his whole mental make-up. Some-time I'll tell you his story; I think it would interest you. In a way, I don't blame him for seeking amusement and happiness where he can find it, and yet—I'm afraid of the result. This supper means more than you can understand, or than I can explain."

"The city is full of Samsons, and most of them have their Delilahs."

Merkle agreed. "These men put Hammon where he is. I wonder if they will let him stay there. It depends upon that girl yonder."

He turned to answer a question from Hannibal Wharton, and Lorelei gave her attention to the part of the entertainment which was beginning on the stage. Turn

after turn appeared—black-faced comedians, feature acts from vaudeville and from the reigning successes, high-priced singers, dancers, monologists followed each other. Occasionally they were applauded, but more frequently their efforts were lost in the self-made merriment of the diners. Now and then, an actor was bombarded with jests or openly guyed. Music and wine flowed as steadily as the crystal stream of the fountain; faces became flushed; glasses rang. The women chattered; the men raised loud voices; the birds fluttered, and the peacocks shrieked. It all blended in a blood-stirring, Bacchanalian joviality. Only now and then the frolic threatened to become a carouse, and the revel bordered upon a debauch.

Of a sudden the clamor was silenced, and indifference gave place to curiosity, for the music had begun the introduction to one of Adorée Demorest's songs.

Lorelei had never seen this much-discussed actress, whose wickedness had set the town agog, and her first impression was vaguely disappointing. Miss Demorest's beauty was by no means remarkable, although it was accentuated by the most bizarre creation of the French shops. She was animated, audacious, Gallic in accent and postures. She was vividly alive, with a magnetism that meant much more than beauty; but she overexerted her voice and her song was nothing to excite applause. At last she was off, in a whirl of skirts, a generous display of hosiery, and a great bobbing of the aigrette pompon that towered above her like an Indian head-dress. Only a moment later she was on again, this time in a daring costume of solid black, against and through which her limbs flashed with startling effect as she performed her famous *Danse de Nuit*.

"Hm-m! Nothing very extreme about that," remarked Merkle, at length. "It would be beautiful if it were better done."

Lorelei agreed. She had been staring with all a woman's intentness at this sister, whose strength consisted of her frailty, and now inquired,

"How does she get away with it?"

"By the power of suggestion, I dare say. Her public is looking for something devilish, and discovers whatever it chooses to imagine in what she says and does."

Hannibal Wharton had changed his seat, and, regardless of the dancer, began a con-



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

"I've traveled some," observed Merkle, "but this city is getting to be the limit." Lorelei nodded
read that. We girls remember all the



her amber head. "There's only one Paris, after all, and that's New York. Don't laugh: I clever things we hear and use them"

versation with Merkle. After a time, Lorelei heard him say:

"It cost me five thousand dollars to pay for the damage those boys did. They threatened to jail Bob, but, of course, I couldn't allow that."

"I remember. That was five years ago, and Bob hasn't changed a whit."

Wharton laughed, but his reply was lost in the clamorous demand for an encore by Mlle. Demorest.

"So he gets his devilment from you, eh?" Merkle inquired.

"It isn't devilment. Bob's all right. He's running with a fast crowd, and he has to keep up his end."

"Bah! He hasn't been sober in a year."

"You're a dyspeptic, John. You were born with a gray beard, and you're not growing younger. He wanted to come to this party, but—I didn't care to have him, for obvious reasons, so I told Hammon to refuse him, even if he asked. He bet me a thousand dollars that he'd come anyhow, and I've been expecting him to overpower those doormen or creep up the fire-escape."

The hand-clapping ceased as the dancer reappeared, smiling and bowing.

"I will dance again if you wish," she announced in perfect English, "introducing my new partner, Mr.—" She glanced into the wings inquiringly—"Señor Roberto. It is his first public appearance in this country, and we will endeavor to execute a variation of the Argentine tango. Señor Roberto is a poor boy. He begs you to applaud him in order that he may secure an engagement and support his old father." She stooped, laughing, to confer with the orchestra leader, who had broken cover at her announcement.

Mr. Wharton was still talking: "That's my way of raising a son. I taught Bob to drink when I drank, to smoke when I smoked, and all that. My father raised me that way."

The opening strain of a Spanish dance floated out from the hidden musicians, and Mlle. Demorest whirled into view in the arms of a young man in evening dress. She was still laughing, but her partner wore a grave face and his eyes were lowered; he followed the intricate movements of the dance with some difficulty. To Lorelei, he appeared disappointingly amateurish. Then a ripple of merriment, growing into

a guffaw, advised her that something out of the ordinary was occurring.

"The—scoundrel!" Wharton cried.

Merkle observed dryly: "He's won your thousand. I withdraw what I said about him; it requires a gigantic intelligence to outwit you." To Lorelei, he added, "That is Mr. Wharton's son."

"Bob," the father shouted, "quit that foolishness and come down here!" But the junior Wharton, his eyes fixed upon the stage, merely danced the harder. When the exhibition ended, he bowed, hand in hand with Miss Demorest, then leaped nimbly over the footlights.

A moment later, he sank into a chair near his father, saying: "Well, dad, what d'you think of my educated legs? I learned that at night school."

Wharton grumbled unintelligibly, but it was plain that he was not entirely displeased.

"You were superb," said Merkle warmly. "It's the best thing I ever saw you do, Bob. You could almost make a living at it."

The young man grinned, showing rows of firm, strong teeth.

"Thanks for those glorious words of praise; that's more than we're doing on the Street, nowadays. Miss Demorest said we'd 'execute' the dance, and we did. We certainly killed Señor Thomas W. Tango, and I'll be shot at sunrise for stamping on Adorée's insteps. I looked before I leaped, but I couldn't decide where to put my feet. Whew! Got any grape juice for a growing boy?" He helped himself to his father's wine-glass and drained it. "You can settle now, dad—one thousand iron men. I owe it to Demorest."

"What do you mean?"

"Debt of honor. I heard she was due here with some kind of an electric thrill, so I offered her my share of the sweepstakes to further disgrace herself by dancing with me." He caught Lorelei's eye and stared boldly. "Hello! I believe in fairies, too, dad. Introduce me to the princess."

Merkle volunteered this service, and Bob promptly hitched his chair closer. Lorelei saw that he was very drunk.

"Tell me more about the 'Parti-color Petticoat' and 'Dentol Chewing-gum,' Miss Knight. Your face is a household word in every street-car," he began.

She replied promptly, quoting haphazard from the various advertisements in which she figured.

"How did you meet that French dancer?" Hannibal Wharton queried sourly of his son.

"I stormed the stage door, bullied the doorman, and waylaid her in the wings. She thought I was you, dad. Wharton is a grand old name."

Wharton senior pressed for further information. "Where did you learn those Argentine wiggles?"

"Hard times are to blame, dad. The old men on the Exchange play golf all day, and the young ones turkey-trot all night. I stay up late in the hope that I may find a quarter that some suburbanite has dropped. It's dangerous to drive an automobile through a dark street these days. One's liable to run down a starving banker or an indigent broker with a piece of lead pipe and a mask. You find it so, don't you, Miss Knight?"

"I have no automobile," said the girl.

"Strange! Show business on the blink, too, eh?" The elder men rose and sauntered away in the direction of their host, whereupon Bob winked.

"They've left us flat. Why? Because the wicked Mlle. Demorest has finally made her appearance as a guest. My dad is a splendid shock-absorber. Naughty, naughty papa!"

"It's probably well that you came with her; fathers are so indiscreet."

Young Wharton signaled to a waiter who was passing with a wine-bottle in a napkin.

"Tarry!" he cried. "Remove the shroud, please, and let me look at poor old Roederer. Thanks. How natural he tastes." Then to Lorelei, "The governor is a woman-hater, but, just the same, I'm glad you drew Merkle instead of him, to-night, or there'd surely be a scandal in the Wharton family. No man is safe in range of your liquid orbs, Miss Knight, unless he has his marriage license sewed into his clothes. Mother keeps her's framed. Wouldn't she enjoy reading the list of Hammon's guests at this party? 'Among those present were Mr. Hannibal C. Wharton, the well known rolling-mill man; Miss Lorelei Knight, principal first-act fairy of the Bergman Revue, and Mlle. Adorée Demorest, the friend of a kink. A good time was had by all, and the diners enjoyed themselves very nice.'" He laughed loudly, and the girl stirred.

"She'd be pleased to read, also, that you came late, but highly intoxicated."

"Ah! Salvation Nell!" Bob took no offense. "If the hour was late, she'd know that my intoxication followed as a matter of course. It always does, just as the dew succeeds the sunset, as the track follows the wheelbarrow, as the cracker pursues the cheese. I am a derivative of alcohol, the one and infallible argument against temperance, Miss Knight."

"You talk as if you were always drunk."

"Oh—not always! By day I am frequently sober, but at such times, I am fit company for neither man nor beast; I am harsh and unsympathetic; I scheme, and I connive. With nightfall, however, there comes a metamorphosis. Ah! Believe me! Once I am stocked up with ales, wines, liquors, and cigars, I become attuned to the nobler sentiments of life. I aspire. I make friends with lonely derelicts whose digestions have foundered on seas of vichy and buttermilk, and I show them the joys of alcoholism—without cost. We share each other's joys and perplexities, at my expense. They are my brothers. I am optimistic; I laugh; I play cards for money; I turkey-trot. I become a living, palpitating influence for good, spreading happiness and prosperity in my wake."

"Do you consider yourself in such a condition now?" queried Lorelei.

"I am, and since it is long past the closing-hour of one, and the tango-parlors are dark, suppose we blow this 'Who's Who in Pittsburgh' and taxicab it out to a road-house where the bass fiddle is still inhabited and the second generation is trotting to the 'Robert E. Lee.'"

Lorelei shook her head, with a smile.

"Don't you dance?"

"I don't care to go."

"Strange!" Mr. Wharton helped himself to a goblet of wine, appearing to heap the liquor above the edge of the glass. "Now if I were sober, I could understand how you might prefer these 'pappy guys' to me, for nobody likes me then, but I'm agreeably pickled. I'm just like everybody you'll be likely to meet this time of night."

"Why don't you ask Miss Demorest? She came with you."

Wharton sighed hopelessly. "Something queer about that lady. D'you know what made us so late? She went to mass on the way down."

"Mass? At that hour?"

"It was a special midnight service conducted for actors. I sat in the taxi and waited. It did me a lot of good."

Some time later, Merkle returned to find Bob still animatedly talking. Catching Lorelei's eye, he signified a desire to speak with her, but she found it difficult to escape. At last, however, she succeeded, and joined her supper companion at the farther edge of the fountain.

Merkle was watching his friend's son with a frown.

"You have just left the personification of everything I detest," he volunteered. "You heard what his father said about raising him—how he taught Bob to drink when he drank, and follow in his footsteps? Well, sometimes the theory works, and a boy grows up with open eyes, but more often it turns out as it has in this case. Bob's an alcoholic, a common drunkard, and he'll end in an institution, sure. But that isn't what I want to say to you. Help me feed these foolish goldfish while I talk."

"Do you think anybody would understand if they overheard you? I fancied you and I were the only sober ones left."

"Some of the girls are all right." Merkle eyed his companion closely. "Don't you drink?"

"I daren't, even if I cared to."

"Daren't?"

"You'll notice that most of the pretty girls are sober."

"Right."

"I have nothing but my looks. Wouldn't I be a fool to sacrifice them?"

"You seem to be sensible, Miss Knight. Something tells me you're the right sort. I know you're trying to get ahead, and—I can help you if you'll help me."

"Help you 'get ahead'?"

He smiled. "Hardly. I need an agent, and I'll pay a good price to the right person."

"How mysterious."

"I'll be plain. That affair yonder—" he nodded toward Jarvis Hammon and Lilas Lynn—"strikes you as a—well, as a flirtation of the ordinary sort. In one way, it is; in another way, it is something very different, for he's in earnest. He thinks he is injuring no one but himself with this business, and he is willing to pay the price; but the fact is he is putting other people in peril—me among the rest. I'm not arguing

for his wife or the two Misses Hammon. I don't go much on the ordinary kinds of morality, and nobody outside of a man's family has the right to question his private life, so long as it is private in its consequences. But when his secret conduct affects his business affairs, when it endangers vast interests in which others are concerned—then his associates are entitled to take a hand. Do I make myself clear?"

"Perfectly. But you don't want me; you want a detective."

"My dear child, we have them by the score. They have told us all they can. We need inside information."

The girl's answer was made with her habitual self-possession.

"I've heard about such things. I've heard about men prying into each other's private affairs, pretending to be friends when they were enemies, and using scandal for business ends. Lilas Lynn is my friend—at least in a way—and Mr. Hammon is my host, just as he is yours. Oh, I know: this isn't a conventional party, and I'm not here as a conventional guest—inside the little coin-purse he gave me is a hundred-dollar bill—but, just the same, I don't care to act as your spy."

Merkle's grave attention arrested Lorelei's burst of indignation.

"Will you believe me," he asked, "when I tell you that Jarvis Hammon and Hannibal Wharton are the two best friends I have in the world? There is such a thing as loyalty and friendship, even in big business: in fact, high finance is founded on confidence and personal honor. This is more than a business matter, Miss Knight."

"I can hardly believe that."

"It's true, however; I mean to serve Hammon. At the same time, I must serve myself and those who trust me. My honor is concerned in this as well as his, and there is a rigid code in money matters. If what I suspect is true, Hammon's infatuation promises to do harm to innocent people. I fear—in fact I'm sure—that he is being used. I've learned things about Miss Lynn that you may not know. What you have told me to-night adds to my anxiety, and I must know more."

"What, for instance?"

"Her real feeling for him—her relations with a man named Melcher—"

"Maxey Melcher?"

"The same. You know his business?"

"No."

"He is a gambler, a political power, a crafty, unscrupulous fellow who represents—big people. By helping me you can serve many innocent persons and, most of all, perhaps, Hammon himself."

Lorelei was silent for a moment. "This is very unusual," she said, at length. "I don't know whether to believe you or not."

"Suppose, then, you let the matter rest and keep your eyes open. When you convince yourself who means best to Jarvis—Miss Lynn and Melcher and their crowd, or I and mine—make your decision. You may name your own price."

"There wouldn't be any price," she told him impatiently. "I'll wait."

Merkle bowed. "I can trust your discretion. Thank you for listening to me, and thank you for being agreeable to an irascible old dyspeptic. Will you permit me to drive you home when you're ready?"

"I'm ready now."

But as Lorelei made her way unobtrusively toward the cloak-room, she encountered Robert Wharton, who barred her path.

"Fairy Princess, you ran away," he declared accusingly.

"I'm leaving." She saw that his intoxication had reached a more advanced stage. His cheeks were flushed; his eyes were wild and unsteady.

"Good news! The night is young; we'll watch it grow up."

"Thank you, no. I'm going home."

"A common mistake. Others have tried and failed." With extreme gravity, he focused his gaze upon her, saying, "Home is the only place that the mayor can't close."

She extended her hand. "Good-night."

"I don't understand—speak English."

"Good-night."

Wharton's countenance darkened unpleasantly, and his voice was rough. "Where'd you learn that line? It's country stuff. We'll leave when I'm ready. Now we'll have a trot."

The music was playing; other couples were dancing, and he seized her in his arms, whirling her away. In and out among the chairs he piloted a dizzy course, while she yielded reluctantly, conscious meanwhile, that Adorée Demorest was watching them with interest.

For an interval, Wharton said nothing, then, with a change of tone, he murmured

in her ear: "D'you think I'd let you spoil the whole night? Can't you see I'm crazy about you?"

Lorelei endeavored to free herself from his embrace, but he clutched her the tighter and laughed insolently.

"Nothing like a good 'turkey' to get acquainted, is there? We're going to dance till we're old folks."

She continued to struggle; they were out of step and out of time, but he held her away from himself easily, bending a hot glance upon her upturned face. She saw that he was panting and doubly drunk with her nearness. "Don't fight. I've got you."

She was smiling faintly, out of habit, but, mistaking her expression, he drew her close once more, then buried his face in her neck and kissed her just at the turn of her bare shoulder.

Then she tore herself away, and his triumphant laugh was cut short as she slapped him resoundingly, her stinging fingers leaving their imprint on his cheek.

Her eyes were flaming and her lips were white with fury, though she continued to smile.

"Here! What d'you mean by that?" he cried.

She silenced him sharply: "Hush! Remember you broke in here. I'd like to see you in that fountain."

There was a swish of garments, a musical laugh, and Adorée Demorest was between them.

"I'm madly jealous, Señor Roberto," she exclaimed. "Come; you must dance once more with me. We'll finish this. What?" She swayed toward him in sympathy with the music, snapping her fingers, and humming the words of the song.

"She—walloped me—like a sailor," the young man stammered incoherently. "She—wants to see me in the fountain."

"Then jump in, like a gentleman," laughed the *danceuse*. "But dance with me first." She entwined her arms about him and forced him into motion. As she danced away, she signaled over her shoulder to Lorelei, who made haste to seek the cloak-room.

When she emerged John Merkle was waiting in the hall. A shout of laughter echoed from the banquet-hall and she started.

"That's nothing," Merkle told her. "Bob Wharton is in the fountain. He says he's a goldfish."



A
wartime
portrait
of Gen-
eral Pickett

The Wartime Story of General Pickett

By
Mrs. General
George E. Pickett

EDITOR'S NOTE—In this instalment we have a vivid picture of life in the capital of the Confederacy while McClellan was beginning his elaborately planned move upon it. The policy and difficulties of the Southern generals before and after the battle of Fair Oaks, or Seven Pines, are also dealt with.

THERE were never before such wonderful roses as those which glorified the gardens of Richmond in that blood-stained summer when the battle of Seven Pines, May 31 and June 1, 1862, was fought. It seemed as if the crimson of the battlefield had been concentrated

in their red petals and a new fragrance of patriotism and devotion had filled their burning hearts.

If I could lay before you the picture of the Richmond of those battle-days, you would say that I had written the most powerful peace argument ever penned. But no pen could give you the faintest shadow of the Richmond of that time of anguish.

The city was shaking with the thunders of the battle, while the death-sounds, thrilled through our agonized souls. The blood of the



FROM AN OLD PRINT

Battle of Seven Pines, or
An attempt of the Confeder-
successful, but it delayed
Robert E. Lee took
retained until

field was running in rivers of red through the hearts of her people. For days the dead-wagons and ambulances wended their tragic way from the battle-



FROM WEBSTER'S COLLECTION

General Robert E. Lee

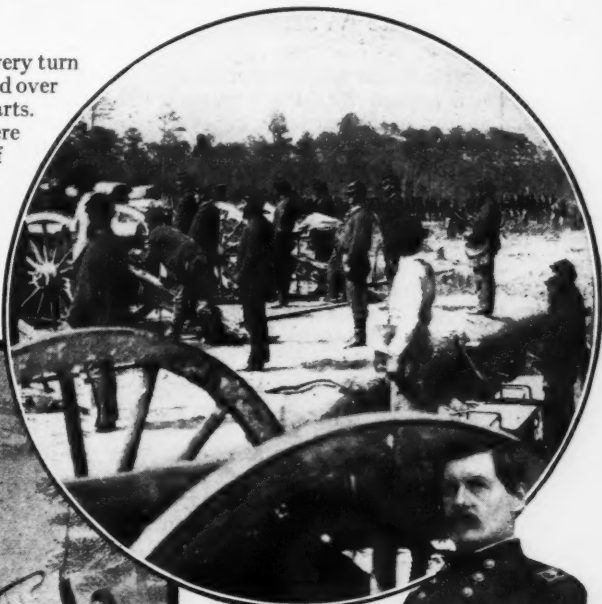
field to the capital city, and every turn of their crunching wheels rolled over our crushed and bleeding hearts. The grim loads of wounded were emptied before the doors of the improvised hospitals until they overflowed with maimed humanity, and all hearts and hands were full of grief for the dead and work for the wounded.



Fair Oaks, May 31 and June 1, 1862

ates to crush the isolated left wing of McClellan's army. It was not the Federal advance upon Richmond. At the close of the battle, command of the Army of Northern Virginia, which he the end of the war

There was not a home in all the city that held not some wounded to be nursed. Every possible space was converted into a temporary hospital, and everything was done that unwearied care and gentle nursing could devise, as tenderly for the roughest in the ranks as for the general who wore the stars. Women, girls, and children stood before the doors with wine and food for the



FROM REYNOLDS COLLECTION

Federal troops aiming their guns at Seven Pines

(From a photograph taken on the field the second day of the battle)

(Right) General McClellan, who planned the great struggle for Richmond, 1862



FROM REYNOLDS COLLECTION

wounded as they passed.

It was not unusual to see half a dozen funeral processions at the same time on their way to the City of the Dead.

Capitol Square was filled with officers, privates, and citizens, seeking information of their loved ones. From all the Southland poured in letters from friends and relatives, with the sacred charge to care for and watch over their loved ones. From all quarters of the Confederacy wives followed their husbands, mothers their sons.

"Come, lassie; here is a telegram from Mrs. B——," said my friend. "Come, dear, and go with me to the train to meet her. How I dread it—poor, dear lady!"

There was a sublime faith in the motherly face that met us at the station—a faith that

The Wartime Story of General Pickett

lifted our hearts to the heights of divinity as our friend greeted us. There was no question, no fear, in the serene, loving eyes. With the strength of her mother-love she had come to seek her boy. "I've come to my boy; he is with General Johnston," she said.

We drove back through mourning Richmond—a strange, foreign Richmond that she had never seen before. From the doors of the houses hung streamers of black. Ambulances filled with wounded passed us, their torturing way marked by the trail of blood that oozed, drop by drop, from their veins.

Wagons filled with dead rolled by, the stiffened bodies piled one upon another in ghastly heaps, rigid feet sticking out from the ends of the vehicles. It was the most appalling sight that ever greeted human eyes, but it was the only way to save our fallen soldiers from the desecration of birds of prey.

Every vehicle was utilized, the less severely wounded walking, their wounds bound in bloody rags. They formed a long procession, nearly five thousand, young boys, middle-aged and white-haired men, from privates to highest officers, passing on to the homes of Richmond where they would find tender care. From some of the open windows, as we passed, came shrieks of pain from those whose courage had been overcome by mortal agony. Down the streets new regiments were marching to the front to fill, in time, other dead-wagons and ambulances.

Sometimes the Richmond of those days comes back to me now, and I shudder anew with terror.

A PATHETIC SCENE

Reaching the beautiful home of our friend and hostess, we hurried our beloved charge, this sweet mother of a soldier, through corridors where closed doors guarded scenes which could be but dimly imagined. Up the stairway and along the hall to a small room she followed our hostess, who sent me down to order up a waiter of refreshments. On my return my friend came out to meet me.

"She does not know, lassie; ah, who will tell her? Heaven help her! Heaven help her!"

Later I saw her go with firm step, erect form, and faith-redeemed face, and stop

silently, as if in prayer, at a closed door. Some one had told her. The door opened and she passed through. Then it softly shut, leaving her alone with her dead.

McCLELLAN APPROACHES RICHMOND

General McClellan had started from Fortress Monroe, being delayed at Yorktown by the spectacular maneuvers whereby General Magruder, waiting there to be reenforced by General Wilcox, created in the mind of "Little Mac" the delusion that his ten thousand Confederates were anywhere from one hundred to one hundred and fifty thousand. Upon receipt of the report that General McClellan's army was on the road to Richmond, General Longstreet and General Smith were ordered to the defense of the capital.

General Joseph E. Johnston, who had been assigned to the command of the Peninsula Army, wished to concentrate the forces in front of Richmond to destroy the Federals and end the war at a stroke, but his plan was opposed because of the danger of weakening other vital points, so a succession of small engagements brought the Army of the Potomac to Seven Pines, at the gateway of our capital.

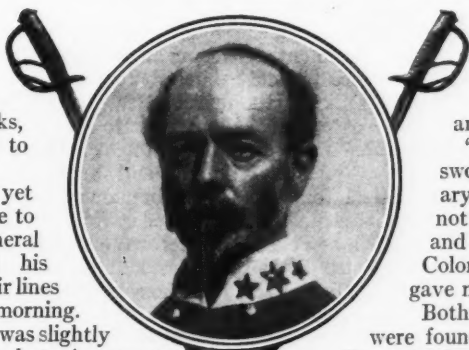
On the morning of May 30th, General Johnston received the report that a corps of Federals was west of Seven Pines. He issued orders for an attack early the next morning, and the concentration of General Huger's troops on the Charles City road and General Hill's on the Williamsburg road. General Longstreet was to form his own and Hill's division in two lines at right angles across the Williamsburg road. Having made all his arrangements, General Johnston left control to Generals Longstreet and Hill and went to the Nine Mile road to watch for reinforcements which might be sent to the Federals from across the Chickahominy, supposing that he could hear from that point the sound of musketry at the opening of the action. But the wind carried the sound away from him, only four miles distant from the scene of action, and took it to McClellan, lying ill ten miles away, who immediately sent General Sumner to Fair Oaks, a point between Seven Pines and Richmond.

The failure to catch the report of the musketry fire delayed General Johnston's attack, which was to have been made simultaneously with that of Longstreet's

troops. Johnston rode on with Hood's brigade, stopping to see a contest near Fair Oaks, and then returned to Seven Pines.

While the battle yet raged, darkness came to force a truce. General Johnston ordered his troops to sleep on their lines to be ready for the morning. Shortly after seven he was slightly wounded by a musket-shot. A little later he remarked to one of his colonels; who was dodging a shell:

"There

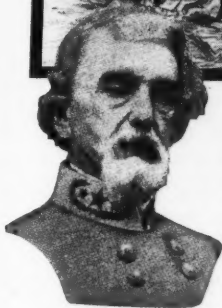
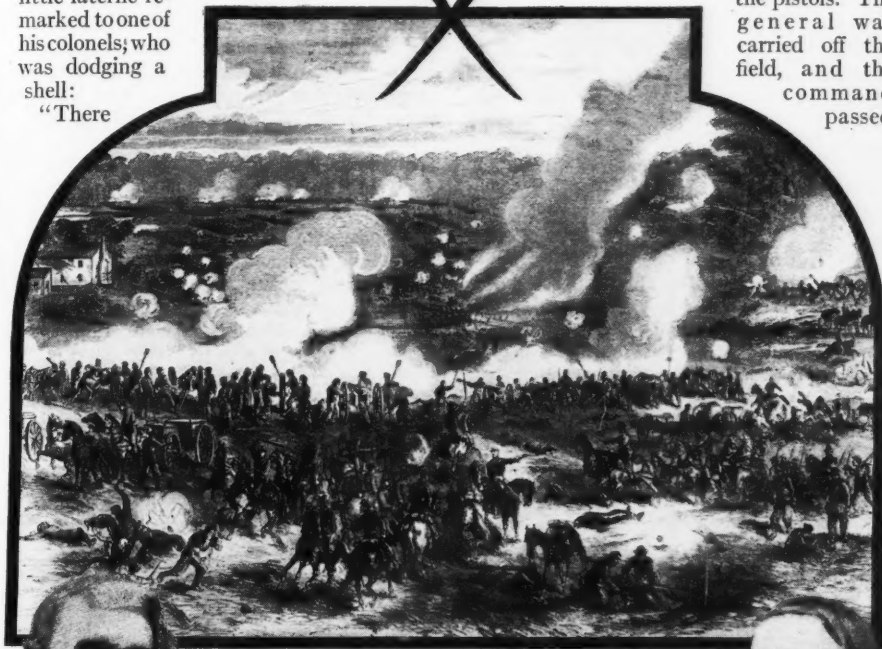


FROM REEVE'S COLLECTION

his couriers. On regaining consciousness he missed his sword and pistols and said:

"My father wore that sword in the Revolutionary War, and I would not lose it for ten thousand dollars. The pistols, Colonel Colt, the inventor, gave me."

Both sword and pistols were found by Armistead, and General Johnston gave him one of the pistols. The general was carried off the field, and the command passed



FROM AN OLD PRINT

General McClellan persists in his attempt to capture Richmond. The battle of Charles City Cross-Roads, on the move from the Chickahominy to the James. (Above) General Joseph E. Johnston, commander of the Army of Northern Virginia until wounded on the first day of Seven Pines. (Left) General Benjamin Huger, C.S.A., and (right) General D. H. Hill, C.S.A., who commanded divisions in the Peninsula Campaign



FROM REEVE'S COLLECTION

is no use in dodging like that, Colonel. When you hear the things they have passed."

At that moment a shell exploded, striking him in the breast. He fell unconscious into the arms of Drewry L. Armistead, one of

temporarily to General G. W. Smith.

General "Joe" Johnston was a natural magnet for bullets, and had seemed fated to come to grief on the field ever since the day when, at ten years of age, for the instruction of a

little colored boy, he illustrated the manner in which the cavalry charges the infantry, the dusky attendant being the infantry and our Joe an imposing line of horsemen. His steed, with surprising lack of military judgment, threw his young rider, who suffered a broken leg.

The military ardor of General Johnston was inherited from the Johnstone clan, which had ridden through Annandale for ten centuries, and had been transmitted to the soldier of the Confederacy by that Peter Johnstone who, seeing from the schoolroom window "Light-Horse Harry" and his riders passing by, dropped his books and ran out to join the horsemen. Few have equaled our Joe in soldierly qualities, military skill, and sagacity, and the art of winning the hearts of his fellow soldiers. One of the greatest obstacles to the success of the Confederacy was the misunderstanding with President Davis, which prevented his great military ability from being employed to its full extent.

PICKETT AT SEVEN PINES

At the opening of the battle of Seven Pines, General Longstreet directed my Soldier with his brigade to move to the York Railroad bridge to repel any advance of the Federals up that road. In the evening, the order came to march at daylight and report to General D. H. Hill, near Seven Pines. This was done, and General Hill directed General Pickett to ride over to the railroad and communicate with General Hood. Of an incident of this ride my Soldier wrote me:

I started at once with Charlie and Archer, of my staff, to obey this order, but had gone only a short distance when we met a part of the Louisiana Zouaves in panic. I managed to seize and detain one fellow, mounted on a mule that seemed to have imbibed his rider's fear and haste. The man dropped his plunder and, seizing his carbine, threatened to kill me unless I released him at once, saying that the Yankees were upon his heels. We galloped back to Hill's headquarters—Archer bringing up the rear with the zouave, who explained that the enemy was advancing in force and was within a few hundred yards of us. Hill ordered me to attack at once, which I did, driving them through an abatis over a cross-road leading to the railroad.

In this movement, General Armistead was on the left, Generals Pryor and Wilcox on the right. Advancing over a second abatis, my Soldier noticed that Armistead's brigade had broken and was leaving the field and, riding to that part of the field, he

found that there was nothing between his command and the railroad except Armistead himself with a regimental color and about thirty men, most of them officers. He sent a courier to General Hill asking for more troops to cover the vacancy. Receiving no reply and being threatened by brigade after brigade of the Federals, and having opposed a front to them, he sent a staff-officer to General Hill with request for troops, and after a while a second despatch for the same purpose. About this time he learned that Pryor's brigade was being withdrawn from the right.

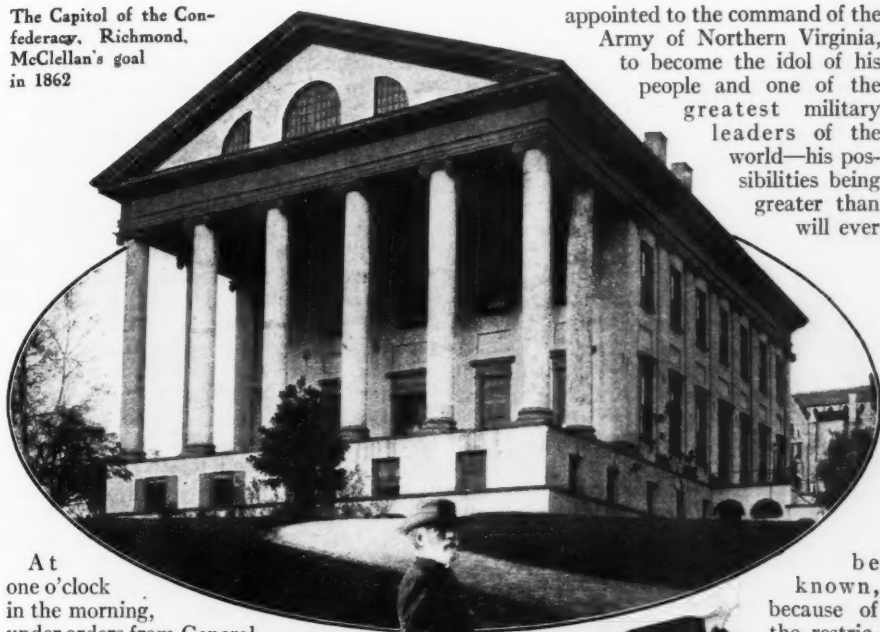
A LOST OPPORTUNITY

In the mean time, all the staff and couriers had been sent back to General Hill, the last message being that if he would send more troops and ammunition, the enemy would be driven across the Chickahominy. Failing to receive any reply, my Soldier rode back and explained the position to General Hill, who asked if the brigade could not be withdrawn, a movement which would have resulted in the abandonment of the wounded, the loss of many more men, and the descent of the Federal troops on the forces in retreat. Reinforcements were then ordered. Meanwhile, the Federals had learned how small was the force opposed to them, and a brigade had debouched from the woods in front and was captured, its commanding officer being killed. In his report my Soldier said:

I do not mean to cast any blame on the brave and heroic Hill, for after the fall of the master-spirit there seemed to be no head, and Hill, I know, was bothered and annoyed by countermanding orders. No assistance, no demonstration was given or made from the other side of the railroad. A most perfect apathy seemed to prevail. *Not a gun was fired*, and I subsequently learned from Brigadier-General Hood that he saw the enemy pouring their forces across the railroad, not more than six or eight hundred yards in his front, and concentrating their attack on me, and that one piece of artillery placed in the railroad cut would have stopped this and drawn their attention to his front. But he said he had instructions to make no movement, but to wait for orders. A forward movement, then, by the left wing of our army would have struck the enemy in flank and, at any rate, have stopped their concentration.

As General Smith, upon whom temporary command had devolved after the fall of General Johnston, suffered a stroke of paralysis the next day, it may be that he, too, was not in condition to be held responsible for the misfortune of Seven Pines.

The Capitol of the Confederacy, Richmond, McClellan's goal in 1862



appointed to the command of the Army of Northern Virginia, to become the idol of his people and one of the greatest military leaders of the world—his possibilities being greater than will ever

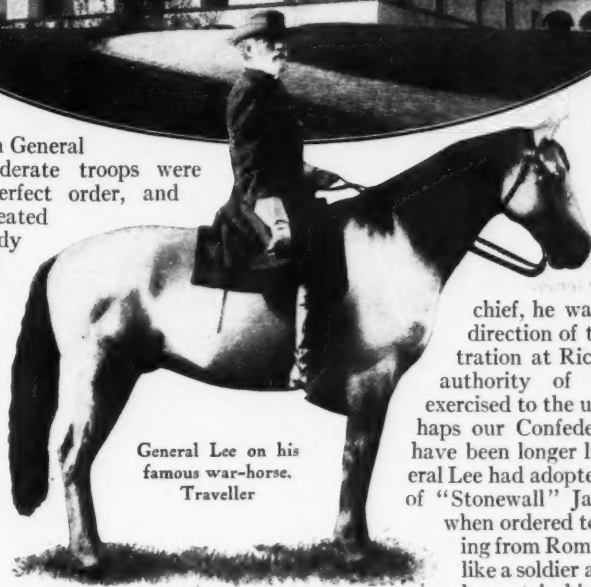
At one o'clock in the morning, under orders from General Hill, the Confederate troops were withdrawn in perfect order, and the Federals retreated to their woody cover. In a letter written at the close of the battle my Soldier said:

Thus was ended the battle of Seven Pines. No shot was fired afterward. How I wish I could say it ended all battles, and that the last shot that will ever be heard was fired on June first, 1862.

Near the close of the letter he mentions the illness of the commander of the Army of the Potomac:

I have heard that my dear old friend, McClellan, is lying ill about ten miles from here. May some loving, soothing hand minister to him. He was, he is, and he will always be, even were his pistol pointed to my heart, my dear, loved friend. May God bless him and spare his life.

Upon the fall of General Johnston at Seven Pines, General Robert E. Lee was



General Lee on his famous war-horse, Traveller

be known, because of the restrictions laid upon his power.

Though he was general-in-chief, he was under the direction of the administration at Richmond, the authority of which was exercised to the utmost. Perhaps our Confederacy would have been longer lived if General Lee had adopted the policy of "Stonewall" Jackson, who, when ordered to recall Loring from Romney, obeyed like a soldier and promptly sent in his resignation

like a human. He was soon reinstated, in response to the clamor of the people, who were not ready to trust their fate to providence without the backing of "Stonewall."

The policy of General Lee, in which Generals Johnston, Longstreet, Beauregard, and others agreed with him, was to concentrate the army and deal the Federals a crushing blow. To them Food, not Cotton, was king. Lee did not believe that withholding cotton from England would force

her into recognition of us. His policy was to sell the cotton for bread.

One of the questions on which General Johnston and the administration most widely differed was as to whether it were better to hold fortified posts, with the division of the army necessary to such a disposition, or to concentrate the army and defeat the opposing force, thereby securing towns, posts, and all at a single move.

JOHNSTON AND THE ADMINISTRATION

Again, General "Joe" Johnston had been censured by the administration because, after the battle of Manassas, he had not marched on to Washington and ended the war on his own terms. His failure to do so was due partly to the lack of provisions, he not being aware at that time that a goodly supply of food was strewn along the road by the Federals, to be had for the gathering. Having been quartermaster-general of the United States army, he had some crystalized ideas as to army supplies, and did not look favorably upon a system which required that his soldiers should starve while they waited for supplies to be collected from the surrounding country, conveyed to Richmond, circulated through the various red-tape-bordered channels, and shipped back to the hungry army after the completion of all ceremonies. He preferred that his men should gather their potatoes and turnips from the field and eat them while they were fresh and wholesome, and develop strength each day for a day's march or battle.

General Lee urged the liberation of the slaves and their enlistment, saying in a letter to the Confederate Congress that, having been taught obedience and fearlessness, the negroes would make good soldiers, and that the Federals would certainly use them if they could get hold of them. He also urged a general law to call out the militia, as a state governor had no power to order militia to cross a county line. Every state was, in her own eyes, of more importance than any of her sisters, and all of the South Atlantic states were in rebellion against the Richmond authorities.

The extreme dignity of General Lee impressed some people as signifying a cold nature, holding his associates somewhat at a distance. An officer in the Army of Northern Virginia, under General Johnston and then under General Lee, said to me,

"Lee was a great soldier and a good man, but I never wanted to put my arm around his neck and kiss him as I used to want to do with Joe Johnston—never."

But General Lee's dignified exterior covered a warm heart, as was apparent in his care for his men. "They need them more than I do," he would say, when special supplies were brought in for him, and he would send them to the hospital. His simple tastes required few luxuries, even in times of peace and prosperity, and in war-days he never liked to fare better than the soldiers in his command. That his great qualities were appreciated was indicated by a soldier who, in a discussion of the descent of man, said, "The rest of us may have come from monkeys, perhaps, but it took a God to make Marse Robert."

PERSONAL TRAITS OF ROBERT E. LEE

His generosity was like the sunshine, warm and all-embracing. He wrote a letter of suggestion to the general who was temporarily in command of the army to which he had been assigned, merely for the purpose of enabling him to win one independent victory and receive the glory of it before giving up the command.

"Marse Robert" could be dictatorial, too, when necessary. With all his modesty, he could outrank the President if occasion required it. Mr. Davis always held that he was intended for a soldier, not for a president, and was persistently fond of being under fire. One day he came out on the field during a battle. When the bullets drew threateningly near, the General said,

"Mr. President, am I in command here?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. Davis.

"Then, sir, I forbid you to stand here under the enemy's guns. I order you off the field."

The President went.

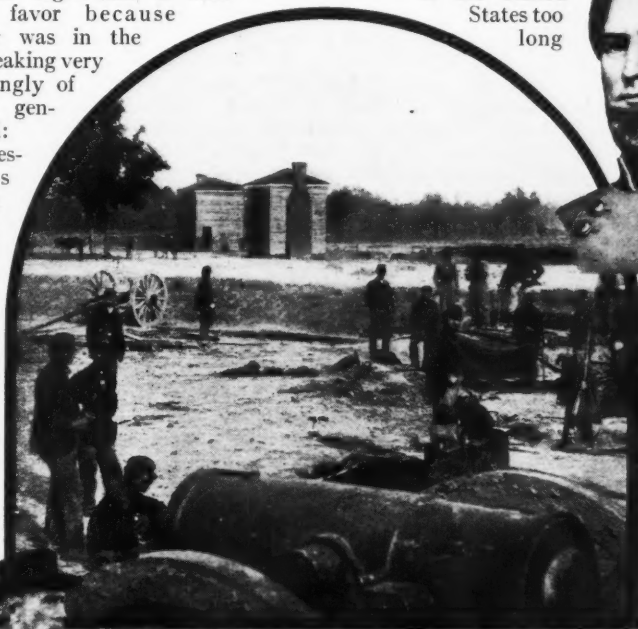
General Lee's impartiality was notable in one who held so much power. He was urged by some of his officers to give his son command of a brigade, but replied that he could not appoint to so important a position an untried officer, especially when it happened to be his own son.

He paid no more attention to personal antagonisms than to personal affection in the management of public affairs. Having

recommended a certain officer for promotion, friends urged him to withdraw his favor because the officer was in the habit of speaking very disparagingly of Lee. The general replied:

"The question is not what he thinks of me but what I think of him. I happen to have a very high opinion of this officer as a soldier, and I shall certainly recommend

ing, he had belonged to the United States too long



FROM NEEBEE COLLECTION

General Gustavus W. Smith, Confederate commander on the second day of Seven Pines

and too entirely to have developed a rigid adherence to the doctrine of state rights, though long after

Where the Federal artillery repelled the Confederate advance on the first day of Seven Pines. The fighting was fiercest at this place, and four hundred Union dead were buried around the house

(This photograph, taken just before the battle, shows the artillerymen of General Casey's division at work on the redoubts)

him for promotion and do all in my power to secure it."

Unlike some of the leaders of the Confederacy, Robert E. Lee had no pet theory the maintenance of which required him to cast his fortunes with the South. A soldier by birth and train-

the war he made the statement that had it not been that the theory of state rights was taught at West Point, there would have been no war. Nor had he any personal ambitions to be served under the new flag of the Southern Cross. His Star of Promise shone clearly in the sky of National Unity.

After the Mexican War, General Scott frequently mentioned the distinguished services, the valor, skill, and undaunted courage of Colonel Lee, calling him the best soldier he ever saw in the field, and saying that, if opportunity offered, he would prove himself the foremost captain of his time. The old general's heart was set upon seeing his favorite officer fill his place at the head of the United States army, and no more pathetic letter was ever penned than the one Lee sent to General Scott with his resignation. The words are restrained and dignified, but between the lines is clearly read the fall of a man's hope, the wreck of his ambition upon the altar of home love.



General Edwin V. Sumner, who came to the rescue of the Federal left wing at Seven Pines

The next instalment of *The Wartime Story of General Pickett* will appear in the February issue.

The Custody of the Child

It is not often, we think, that one comes across such a story as this. With a master's stroke, the author pictures a situation that seems relentless and inevitable. But is it? The husband has been forewarned. The wife was unfortunate in having parents who developed, to the greatest extent, the weakest traits in her character. She was well prepared for a career tragic to herself and to others. And the man took his chances. We hear a great deal nowadays of the vital necessity of training the child with regard to its individual characteristics, and we believe that Mr. Morris' little story is worth a whole volume on the subject.

By Gouverneur Morris

Author of "The Penalty," "Radium," "Legay Pelham's Protégée," etc.

Illustrated by John Alonzo Williams

OUTWARDLY, the Renfrew divorce was a very ordinary affair. Such notoriety as it enjoyed was entirely owing to the prominence of the litigants. But there is an inside story, and I propose to tell this out of friendship for Renfrew. He was one of the very best.

There are two stories to every divorce: the story which is given to the judge—and the truth. The story of the Renfrew troubles as given to Judge Orme was merely that Renfrew had been unfaithful to his wife. And Mrs. Renfrew was granted her divorce and the custody of the child.

Renfrew was one of the best liked men in New York. His fortune and station had nothing whatever to do with this. He walked straight into people's hearts on the strength of a disposition that was never clouded, of a purpose that was never veiled. Without ulterior motive, he lived to like and be liked. On the few occasions when he was observed to drink too much, his amiability and generosity, alone, became a little exaggerated. He was a man's man, loving his friends, helping them when they weren't looking, and passing no judgments that were not his own upon anyone. He was not exactly what we Americans call "bright," but he gathered points without difficulty and had the readiest and most unintentionally flattering laugh. For a party to be a "go," it was only necessary that Renfrew should be present. And when he fell in love with Miss Culver it was a tragedy to many bachelors. For they knew that he would play the game of marriage as he had played all other games,

fairly and squarely, with tact, with that generosity which welled from him like water from a spring, and according to the letter of the marriage service and according to the spirit. "If she wants him to stay at home nights," we said, "he will stay. If she doesn't want him to go on little shooting-trips, he will not go. And because she is a woman she will want the former, and not want the latter, and there will be one contagious and heartening laugh the less when the weary business men gather before dinner at the club."

So we prognosticated, and so we half believed. So we fully believed when we lined up with him in St. George's and saw the look on his face and heard the voice with which he spoke the tremendous promises which separate the honest man from his father and his mother and his friends and his clubs.

But we couldn't find it in our hearts to blame him. She was the prettiest thing you ever saw, and had the tenderest, best bred voice, and was much too young not to be sure of what she was doing. It's your old girl that marries by halves, not sheltered sweet-and-twenty.

Well, she was actually younger than she looked, but not quite so innocent. She didn't know men; she didn't know women; she didn't know the world. But she knew herself. She knew that, from the first time she had howled for jam until she told them that she wanted Renfrew, her parents had given her everything she asked for. And she knew that almost everything she had asked for in her short, merry life had, almost immediately, upon acquisition,

ceased to be desirable. She had given away, without wearing once, more hats and frocks and things than she had ever worn. I don't mean that she was a dissatisfied sort of person—far from it. For the disenchantment of something newly acquired was at once offset by the eager and hopeful desiring of some other new thing. With the wanting of new things, new experiences, new environments, and the knowledge that she would presently get them, she kept happy all the time.

She was very frank about herself with Renfrew. He told me so himself at the time of the divorce.

"Why," he said, "it was hanging over me from the beginning. She said she knew she cared for me, and knew she wanted to be married to me; but she said she had never cared for anything after it belonged to her, and how did she know it wouldn't be the same with me? It wasn't her fault, she said. She was just made that way. She was sorry, but she couldn't help it. She was giving me fair warning, and, if I still wanted to marry her and take a chance, I mustn't blame her if she turned out to be an inconstant, no-good person."

That was how she put it to Renfrew. And he was quite willing to take his chances.

And when they went to the altar, and for a long time afterward, she certainly loved him beyond belief, with a love that almost reconciled the friends who had lost him to losing him. If he *had* to marry, it was good that he had married her. His marriage, indeed, was such a success on the face of it, the face it wore for several years, that many of us, bachelors by the high cost of living, by principle, or by the complications of selfishness, wondered if another like her might not be found somewhere in the rosebud garden of girls.

Personally, I never felt so sure of a marriage—after it had lasted for two years

without any signs of lapsing. I went to the house a great deal—not as an old friend of his, but as a new and trusted friend of theirs. I did all I knew to get on her right side and into her good graces—searching my whole nature for those mislaid powers of thoughtfulness with which, like everybody else, I must undoubtedly have been endowed at the time of my birth, praising her gowns, and her newest acquisitions, and her dinners. And I must have succeeded, if only in a small measure, for a time came when she would not see any of her new friends but me, and when presently the baby was born, I was promoted from the rank of intimate to that of godfather.

She had wanted a baby in the worst way. And when she got it, she liked it. But its arrival was a torment which she was unable to forgive or to forget. In all her life she had never, until those interminable, dusk, electric, and dayn-lit hours, known



"Oh," she laughed, "give me time. Just wait until I begin to think it would be more fun to be a wicked adventuress"

the least thing about fear and agony. And when these were over it seemed to her that she had lost every shadow of modesty and self-respect. In the midst of it all—between agonies—she had made Renfrew promise that he would never ask her to have another baby.

As if he had asked her to have that one! Or she him! If ever a love-made, undeliberated baby came into the world, it was Miss Beatrice Renfrew. I know that. But I don't know why, the moment she had been christened Beatrice, her parents at once took to calling her Tam.

Renfrew had supposed that his cup of happiness was full. Tam's coming proved him mistaken. It seemed that the happiness of mere marriage was an illusion, and that only the happiness of marriage plus the fruit thereof was real. The great tenderness that he had for his wife, even, seemed to be reborn, seemed to be redoubled, and yet left room in him for that new and equally great tenderness which the helpless, alluring, and expressive Tam roused in his breast.

Fathers of more than one child often experience this tenderness, not for all of their offspring but for one of them. And usually the one that needs it the least—for the soundest, strongest willed one, that is going to get everything, anyway. It is not so often that the father of but one child loves it beyond belief, reason, or common sense. But it was just so that Renfrew loved Tam. They—Mrs. Renfrew and the trained nurse—could do nothing with him. For him, those modern and scientific practises by which infants are put in the way of good citizenship or noble womanhood were barbarous and impious. The idea of letting Tam have her cry out rather than lift her and give her whatever it was she was crying for, seemed to him born of just such narrow and brutish minds as raised the Spanish Inquisition to a perfection of injustice and torture.

At first Mrs. Renfrew viewed his infatuation with tolerance.

"Tam," she said, "is the image of me, and so it's all very flattering—if only indirectly.

"But it's enough to have one spoiled baby in the family—meaning me. I was never allowed to cry for anything—long. And behold the result! Everything that ought to be fun, now, I had so long ago that there's no fun in it."

We were alone at the table; a crying—pure temper—in the distant nursery having reached Renfrew's acute ears, snatched him from us as if upon the end of a lariat.

"I was just going to say," I said, "that the results of pampering have been so excellent in your case, that, if I were Tam's mother, I wouldn't have any fears about her. You're a good wife, a good friend, and a good mother. Maybe if you'd been whipped when you were young, you would be a wicked adventuress."

"Oh," she laughed, "give me time. If I'm the things you say, which I doubt, it's only because, for the time, I enjoy being them. Just wait until I begin to think it would be more fun to be a wicked adventuress. Nothing, I assure you, will stop me. Well?"

This to Renfrew, who had just returned with a very apologetic but very happy expression on his face.

"She didn't want to go to sleep," he explained, "unless she had her new shoes on."

"And what did you do for her?"

"I distracted her mind," he said darkly.

"Tell the truth."

He broke into that wonderful mischievous-boy smile of his.

"I distracted her mind," he said, "by finding the shoes and putting them on for her. And then she went to sleep like a good girl."

"Did you take her thumb out of her mouth?"

Renfrew couldn't lie.

"No," he said.

"If she has protruding teeth it will be your fault."

Mrs. Renfrew turned to me.

"I ask *you*," she said, "what chance has Tam got with a father like that?"

"Suppose," said Renfrew, with a sudden gravity, "a father didn't spoil his baby daughter? Suppose something happened to her, and all the rest of his life he had to hear her crying for the shoes that he hadn't given her? I never had much imagination. But I've got it now—in bales—about that baby. It's no use [your scolding me and disciplining me. I won't be good. I dare not.]"

If I have conveyed the impression that Tam was a spoiled brat, and no more, I have done her a grave injustice. She was the most fascinating, mischievous, witty,

and affectionate baby I ever saw, full of whimsical inventions, on the go all day, investigating, destroying, approving, damning, an unmincing truth-teller, and, even to timid bachelor arms, a warm bundle of pure delight.

It seems to me, out of no very great experience of ecstasies, that the greatest ecstasy of all is when a female baby, by her own sovereign will and desire, elects to sit in your lap. And I can understand, if only vaguely, what went on in Renfrew's heart whenever Tam was in question. The welcome she gave him after absences! He had but to be gone an hour, to return, to thrust his head in at the nursery door, and then—such sounds of joy as burst upon the air were made in heaven. Sounds more articulate than speech, shrill, rapid as the detonation of a Maxim gun, born of and borne upon the breath of ecstasy! And I have seen Renfrew go down upon his knees and open his arms, and I have seen the rushes she has made into them, and I have heard—I hear now—the wonderful swift pattering of her tiny feet across the nursery floor.

Joy sometimes is so great that it can't be borne. I have seen Renfrew get up from his knees, after much skylarking, so happy, so bursting with yearning and tenderness, that it hurt him, and he looked ready to cry. It got so that the care-free, heavy sleeper became a light sleeper, and was up

many times in the night, ashamed, flooded with love and anxiety, moving upon tiptoe across the hallway to the nursery door, there lingering, listening, and imagining.

II

I HAD just returned from the opera, where

I had put in a very pleasant evening listening to an Englishwoman with red hair telling stories to a boxful of people. I was still laughing about her, when the telephone-bell rang, and I heard, presently, Renfrew asking if I would mind sitting up a little longer, as he wished to see me about something very important.

I had my man light a fire and put out drinks. Then Renfrew came, nervous, ill at ease, and in no hurry to come to the point.

This made me nervous. And for some time we fought shy of any topic of the slightest interest. We talked stocks, fire insurance, and the widening of Fifth Avenue. Renfrew had two drinks, and kept warming his hands at the fire. Twenty minutes passed. Then he broke off abruptly from something that he had started to say, drew a couple of quick breaths, and for

the first time sat down.

"I came to tell you a lot of things," he said; "and I'm shy about starting."



I have seen Renfrew go down upon his knees and open his arms, and I have seen the rushes she has made into them

"I see you are. But you needn't be."
 "It's all very intimate and awful," he said. "Do you mind?"

"Go ahead."

"Ellen wants to divorce me."

"What's that?"

"Divorce me—that's all."

"Will you please tell me why?"

"Yes," he said, "I will. I've been a good husband to her. I've never neglected her. I've made love to her ever since I fell in love with her. And I've been absolutely faithful to her, in word and deed. And as far as I can make out, *that's* why she wants a divorce."

"Cut out the bitterness, *please*," I said, "and come down to facts. Good God, man, you could knock me over with a feather! Isn't this some kind of a joke, in very questionable taste, that you're trying to put over?"

"Do I look as if I were joking. I tell you, she has no better reason. If you want the real truth, she's a spoiled child; she has tired of me—she's always said she would sometime or other——"

"That's no excuse."

"It's good enough for her. She says she gave me *fair* warning when she married me, and she seems to think that that excuses anything she may do now. Suppose I said to you, 'Some day, old man, I'm going to steal your black pearl'—would that excuse me when the day came and I stole it?"

"But just being bored with existing circumstances isn't a good enough reason for breaking up a home. What is back of it all? Is there some other man?"

Renfrew nodded.

"Oh!" I exclaimed, "now we're getting down to business. Crazy about him, I suppose?"

"Says she would throw herself under a motor-truck to save him a moment's pain—why a motor-truck, particularly? Pleasant listening for a husband! What?"

"What have you thought out?"

"Nothing but murder. And no matter how I feel, I know I'm not up to that."

"Who is he?"

Renfrew named the last man in New York whom I would have suspected—a man who passed for honorable, just, and high-minded, a man we had both of us known all our lives and liked.

"Does he feel the same way about her?"

"So *she* says."

"And when did you find all this out?"

"I've been worried over it for several months. But she only told me to-day. And she's in a great hurry for her divorce. You see, when she sees a toy she wants, she isn't in the habit of writing to Santa Claus about it, and then waiting till Christmas."

"But she can't get a divorce. You haven't been cruel or unfaithful. You haven't deserted her. Just sit tight, and she'll come around in time. Take her away somewhere; let her spend a lot of money—capital, if necessary."

He lifted his right hand and let it fall limply.

"She married me on a condition," he said. "She seems to have foreseen what's happened. She wouldn't marry me until I'd promised her that if ever she wanted to be free, I'd let her go."

"What rot!" I said. "She wasn't serious, and you weren't."

"No," he admitted; "but she is now, and a promise is a promise."

"Do you actually feel yourself bound to such a piece of nonsense?"

"Why, yes—hand and foot."

"You'll help her to a divorce?"

He nodded.

"Well," I said; "it will take time. She'll have to go West somewhere for six months. She'll soon tire of that. And you'll have to go through the motions of deserting. By the time the thing comes up in court she'll be sick to death of the new love and will want to be on with the old."

"It won't be that kind of a divorce," he said. "She doesn't want to go West. I'm to put myself in wrong. And then the affair can be rushed through."

"Look here," I said; "you have no right to blemish your reputation."

"Does it matter?"

"It matters like the devil. Yours isn't just a marriage. What you are for breaking up is a home. There's Tam. Let Ellen go to the devil if she likes. You stick by Tam. Let Ellen run away with what's-his-name, and have her fling. But don't you make it a legal fling. Let her get the punishment she deserves. Let her come sneaking back to New York and find that she is no longer made much of in the best circles. Let her have her cak and eat it, and be sick!"

"No. I promised."

"How about Tam? Who gets Tam?"



A few minutes later we had the real pleasure of seeing him fall heavily asleep

"Oh, I suppose they'll say I'm not a proper guardian. Don't let's talk about Tam. Losing Ellen is about all I can stand. Why—I love her just the way I did when I asked her to marry me."

Sudden tears blinded him, and he was not ashamed.

"She's terribly sorry for me," he went on, "and—oh, if you only knew how much I'd like to be dead!"

"There's one thing you don't realize," I persisted. "You can get along without Ellen—after a time, I mean. But you can't get along without Tam. I've seen you with her too often. And what is much more, Tam can't get along without you. Perhaps you haven't allowed your mind to dwell on Tam's being brought up by a stepfather with ideas of discipline—for other men's daughters. If he hasn't shrunk

from breaking up your home, he wouldn't shrink from beating your baby black and blue."

Renfrew said nothing for a while. He got very white, and I could see that his heart was going at a great rate. After a while he spoke in a voice that jumped and jerked.

"Are you trying to work me up to do murder?"

Then there was another silence. Then he said: "If I can get along without Ellen, I can get along without Tam. And it won't be for long, anyway."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, I think I'll just die," he said. "People talk lightly and skeptically of broken hearts. Mine's broken—right in two. I'm no good for anything any more—ever. You think you know better. I don't blame you. I know it sounds currish

and weak and contemptible. But it's God's truth. She hasn't just given a jolt to my pride and complacency, old man. She's given me my death-blow."

He straightened himself with an effort.

"Now, then; let's get down to business. First, I want a lawyer. If I've got to put myself in wrong, I want to do it good and proper, so that there'll be no question of Ellen not getting what she wants."

"Of course," I said, "you know that if you get caught putting up a job of this kind, you can be sent to state prison."

"Yes," he cried; "you don't get punished for doing wrong. You get punished for doing right. It's the kind husband, the loving, the faithful, that loses his wife. But the boulder, the drunkard, the brute, the beater, the treacherous, lecherous beast—he knows how to keep his woman in leash, faithful till death, and, when the inevitable happens and he is carried off, there she is digging with her nails to get into the same grave with him!"

The more excited he got, the calmer I tried to appear. I said:

"As you are still able to make perfectly accurate observations of life, I have hopes for you. You are quite right. The good are punished in this world much oftener than the wicked. I agree absolutely with everything you've said."

There is nothing more soothing to a man than to be agreed with, unless perhaps you have the gift of eloquence and can out-Herod him. In a few minutes we were talking ways and means, sketching the outlines of a mean little plot.

III

He soon found it impossible to go on living in his town house. The emptiness of the nursery spread like a malignant tumor until every other room was diseased. He missed Ellen terribly. But he missed Tam in such a way that it almost drove him mad. He kept imagining that she was sick and calling for him.

We had managed the divorce beautifully.

The other "lady" in the case was plain, middle-aged, and wore spectacles. The witnesses managed to agree upon a story and stick to it; and only these persons, the Renfews, their lawyers, Bill Thomas, and myself, were in the secret. Of course Renfew's friends believed that it was a put-

up job, but the rest of society was really taken in. These believed that Renfew, secretly, had been a dissolute fellow all his life, and that he had only got what he deserved.

The poor soul kept a pretty stiff upper lip for six months, sold his town house, went on several shooting-trips, and was companionable, if not gay. But the day she married the other man he carried on like a lunatic. There's no use writing about it. Any married man, who has done no great wrong, and who is very much in love with his wife, and properly jealous of her, will readily imagine what he went through. As night came on we managed to make him drink a good deal, and Bill Thomas got some pills, with instructions, from a young fellow just out of the P. and S. and we dropped a couple of these into his last drink that night, and a few minutes later we had the real pleasure of seeing him fall heavily asleep.

To be on the safe side, we were both with him when he waked. But this was not necessary. The drug had left an aftermath of deadened sensibilities. He talked wildly enough, but no longer murderously or suicidally. And Bill and I prided ourselves on having averted a catastrophe. But I sometimes wonder if we weren't just officious and interfering—men living in great cities get such conventional and timid notions. It might have been better to have kept out of the way. He wouldn't have hurt Ellen, of course, and he could never have won her back. But he could have saved himself one or two of life's worst pains, and could even have given himself a few moments of purest enjoyment into the bargain. There are times in certain men's unfortunate lives when to fill some other man full of lead, failing an opportunity to put him to death slowly by torture, must afford the most complete and delicious satisfaction imaginable.

However, the thing was settled, and Renfew did not thereafter show any especial inclination to firearms. He merely wrapped himself in melancholy and brooded. People no longer amused him, but he could not bear to be alone. He became something of a trial, even to his best friends. I would rather have listened to the story of his troubles over and over from the beginning than to have been all the time conscious that he was thinking about them,

that I was thinking about them, and that we were both doing our best to talk of something else.

He had a legal right to see Tam twice a month, but this was of very little advantage after the first six months, as her mother took her abroad on the new honeymoon, and Renfrew had a mistaken delicacy about following them. But he got to thinking about Tam more and more, to missing her more and more, and finally, to my great relief, he began to form the habit of talking about her.

When Ellen and her new husband returned from Europe, Renfrew wrote her a pathetic letter, asking if she wouldn't let him have Tam to keep. He told her that he thought about very little else in this world, and that it seemed unfair that he, who had once had so much, should now have nothing. He even promised that he would mend his ways toward Tam, bring her up in the way she should go, and not be all the time spoiling her.

Ellen announced that she was very sorry for him, but could not at present see any good reason for going against the decision of the court. "You seem to forget," she wrote, "that I am just as fond of Tam as you are. And I don't want to hurt your feelings, but you know very well you were never able to say 'no' to her, and you probably wouldn't be able to now. She's spoiled enough as it is."

He showed me the letter, and when I had read it, made comments.

"It seems," he said, "that an innocent man has no rights at all. She says she loves Tam as much as I do. What rot! You've seen Tam and me together. Would any woman who loved Tam as much as I do separate us? Two afternoons a month! If I saw her three afternoons a month I suppose it would corrode and corrupt her young morals. It's all right for her to see the housebreaker every day—the man who ate my salt and plotted against me while he ate it. He's a perfectly good influence. But I'm Satan. I'm anathema. I can't be trusted with a little child. I might teach her that when she promises to love, honor, and obey a man till death parts them that it means something. Wouldn't that be awful! Think of a young girl brought up to believe and practise that!"

"I always thought you were a fool to furnish Ellen with grounds for a divorce."

"I tell you I promised."

"You were a fool to promise."

"I'm a fool to go on living."

He got out of his chair and began walking up and down the room, twisting his fingers together and swearing. Some of the words I had never heard before and have never heard since. He stopped abruptly and became reminiscent about Tam.

"Before she could talk she had a way of sniffing up her nose—meaning, 'Pick me up and take me for a walk in the garden, and show me the flowers.' I used to carry her up and down the paths until my arms were nearly broken. God, what fun it was! If it was toward sunset, she stopped being a human baby and became a sort of little gnome and fairy. She could see things in the shrubberies and under the lilacs that grown people can't see—other gnomes and fairies likely. She'd give little joyous cries of recognition and surprise, and point, 'What, you here! Well you could knock me over with a feather!' And they must have answered. Because sometimes she'd laugh right out, as if they'd said something that was almost too funny. And then she'd forget about them, and think she was teasing me. She used to think that if she hid her head in my neck it tickled me most to death—and so I'd squirm and giggle, and she'd get laughing so she could hardly stop. Pretty rough to have meant a lot to a child and to wake up every morning wondering if she's absolutely forgotten you or not."

He tried going away—made rather an elaborate exploring-trip to Alaska, found that he couldn't keep his mind off his own misfortunes and Tam, and no matter how tired he got during the day couldn't sleep at night, gave up his expedition just when it was beginning to have results and came home. I mean he came back to New York. He had no home.

I saw him the day he arrived, and he told me that he had reached the end of his tether. "Four and a half days in a train without sleep," he said—"without sleep. Four and a half days. But I'm going to put an end to all this."

"You're going to see a doctor!"

"Yes. But not for insomnia. Listen: I've thought it all out. I've had plenty of time—nights. It's dead easy, and I ought to have done it before. No, I won't drink anything. I'm on the wagon. Don't do



DRAWN BY JOHN AUGUST WILLIAMS

In one breath, Bill Thomas and I whispered, "What's the matter?"

for a child to have a drinking father. She's getting old enough to notice. Now listen. This is where you come in. I want to charter a seagoing yacht—a big, solid, comfortable one. You belong to the New York Yacht Club, don't you? Just see what's kicking about loose."

"All right," I said, in some wonder. For although able to afford salt water, he had never been fond of it. He went on rapidly:

"They've got the Burrige house in the Wheatley Hills. I know it inside out. So do you. I'll find out somehow or other which is Tam's room. She belongs to me, and I'm going to take her. We'll go at night in a car, whisk her out of the house, make a record to the Sound. We'll have two cars, in case one breaks down—get her on the yacht, and make for the nearest Canadian port. You'll help?"

I thought the matter out for a while, and finally said that I would help. It is hard for a conservative city man to become lawless in five minutes.

So I found just the ship that Renfrew wanted, and he did all the rest—spying on the Burrige house, locating Tam's room, the farmer's longest ladder. And we fixed upon the night of the ninth for the actual kidnaping.

It was all very exciting. I don't quite know why. Even if we got caught at it, the chances were that nothing very terrible would happen. But there's something exciting even in breaking into an empty barn by daylight, and when we were gathered under Tam's window with the ladder, I know that my own particular nerves were kicking up the deuce of a row.

The window was open and palely lighted. But this was undoubtedly from one of those stumpy night-lights without which modern children seem unable to sleep. It really made matters easier. The chief difficulty would probably be with the child's nurse. She slept in the next room, but of course, if Tam, surprised in sleep, kicked up a row, she would wake and

scream, and we'd have to act mighty quick to make our getaway.

Renfrew, however, was all ready for the nurse. He had a roll of yellowbacks three inches in diameter and a big blue automatic. If she waked he intended to kidnap her, too, either by bribery or intimidation.

We leaned the long ladder against the window-sill, and Renfrew, in soft tennis-shoes, went swiftly up it. The moment he could see into the room he became suddenly still, as if he had been frozen. He stayed that way a long time. Then he lifted one foot, as though it was very heavy, then the other—and then crawled in through the window. He was gone a long time. We couldn't imagine what was keeping him. Not a sound came down to us. At least a quarter of an hour passed. Then Renfrew appeared at the window—alone. He squirmed out of it, and slowly descended the ladder. He reached the ground, and stood, swaying from side to side and muttering.

In one breath, Bill Thomas and I whispered, "What's the matter?"

He caught at the ladder for support, and spoke very quietly.

"They've let her die on their hands," he said. "She looks as if she was made of transparent wax. You could see where she had bitten her lips. It must have been very sudden. There were just a few flowers out of the garden on the bed, and some candles burning. There was an old woman to sit up with her, and she was asleep. I wish I knew if she wanted me when she was in her trouble. Do you suppose she asked for me—and he wouldn't let her send? Let's go away now. Better put the ladder back where you got it, so there won't be any scandal. Thank you all ever so much for taking all this unnecessary trouble. I'll wait in the car if you don't mind. I can't control my nerves very well just yet. I wonder if she asked for me?"



The Revealing Angels

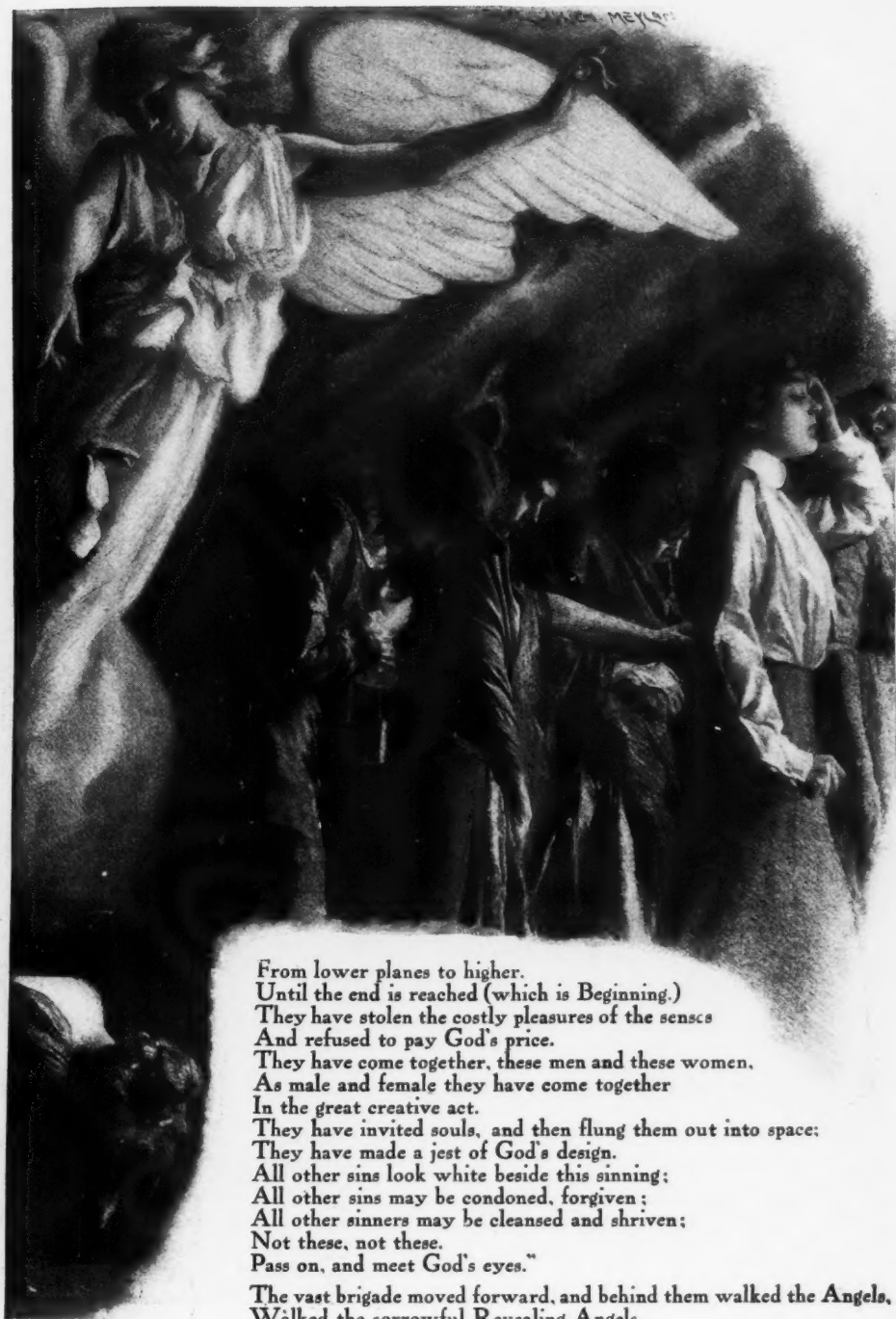
By Ella Wheeler Wilcox

SUDDENLY and without warning they came
The Revealing Angels came.
Suddenly and simultaneously, through city streets,
Through quiet lanes and country roads they walked
They walked crying: "God has sent us to find
The vilest sinners of earth.
We are to bring them before him, before the Lord of Life."

Their voices were like bugles;
And then all war, all strife,
And all the noises of the world grew still;
And no one talked;
And no one toiled, but many strove to flee away
Robbers and thieves, and those sunk in drunken-
ness and crime,
Men and women of evil repute,
And mothers with fatherless children in their arms, all
strove to hide.
But the Revealing Angels passed them by,
Saying: "Not you, not you.
Another day, when we shall come again
Unto the haunts of men,
Then we will call your names;
But God has asked us first to bring to him
Those guilty of greater shames
Than lust, or theft, or drunkenness, or vice
Yea, greater than murder done in passion.
Or self-destruction done in dark despair.
Now in his Holy Name we call:
Come one and all;
Come forth; reveal your faces."

Then through the awful silence of the world,
Where noise had ceased, they came
The sinful hosts.
They came from lowly and from lofty places,
Some poorly clad, but many clothed like queens;
They came from scenes of revel and from toil,
From haunts of sin, from palaces, from homes,
From boudoirs, and from churches.
They came like ghosts
The vast brigades of women who had slain
Their helpless, unborn children. With them trailed
Lovers and husbands who had said, "Do this,"
And those who helped for hire.
They stood before the Angels before the Revealing
Angels they stood.
And they heard the Angels say,
And all the listening world heard the Angels say:
"These are the vilest sinners of all;
For the Lord of Life made sex that birth might come:
Made sex and its keen, compelling desire
To fashion bodies wherein souls might go

DRAWING BY PAUL CLARA ARTHUR



From lower planes to higher.
Until the end is reached (which is Beginning.)
They have stolen the costly pleasures of the senses
And refused to pay God's price.
They have come together, these men and these women,
As male and female they have come together
In the great creative act.
They have invited souls, and then flung them out into space;
They have made a jest of God's design.
All other sins look white beside this sinning;
All other sins may be condoned, forgiven;
All other sinners may be cleansed and shriven;
Not these, not these.
Pass on, and meet God's eyes."

The vast brigade moved forward, and behind them walked the Angels,
Walked the sorrowful Revealing Angels.



DRAWN BY PAUL BRANDON

With tender, mothering lips she lifted them from the water by their necks

The Shadows and John Hatch

Here is a rare treat for those who sympathize with the little people of the wild in their losing life-battles. Two great artists, one with the pen and one with the brush, give a vivid description of the pitiless duel between human intelligence and brute instinct in the eternal war of self-preservation in the woods. It is a combination of names that stands high—even among *Cosmopolitan* "top-notchers." In our opinion these two men portray animal life better than any others, and in this belief we are preparing to present more of their work at an early date.

By Charles G. D. Roberts

Illustrated by Paul Bransom

WHEN John Hatch found the lynx kittens in their shallow den on the bright and windy shoulder of Old Sugarloaf, he stood for some minutes looking down upon them with a whimsical mixture of compassion and hostility. In his eyes, all lynxes were vermin of the worst kind. They had killed three of his sheep. An old male had clawed his dog so severely that the dog had lost its nerve and all value as a hunting partner. They were great destroyers of the young deer, the grouse, and the hares, and so interfered with the supply of John Hatch's larder. In a word, they were his enemies, and therefore, according to his code, to be destroyed without compunction. But these were the first kittens of the hated breed that Hatch had ever seen. Unlike the full-grown lynx, whose fur is of a tawny, shadowy gray, these youngsters had sleek, brilliant coats adorned with stripes like a tiger's. They were so young that their eyes were not yet open, and they lay huddled cozily and trustingly together. But this was no extenuation of their crime in John Hatch's eyes.

Presently he stooped down and stroked the huddle of shining fur. Blind babies though they were, the youngsters knew the touch for an alien one, the unknown smell for the smell of an enemy. Their tails and the ruffs of their necks bristled instantly, and, with a feeble spitting, they turned and clawed savagely at the intruding hand. The little claws drew blood, and John Hatch withdrew his hand with a laugh that had a touch of admiration in it.

"Gosh, but ye're spunky little devils,"

he muttered. "But ye ain't a-goin' to grow up to use them claws on my sheep nor my dawg, an' don't ye fergit it!" For a moment he thought of wringing their necks as the simplest way of getting the matter off his hands. But his kindly disposition shrank from the barbarity of the process; and after all, to his mind, they were kittens of a kind, and therefore entitled to a more gracious form of taking-off. For all their spitting and clawing, he picked them up by the scruffs of their necks, stuffed two of them into his capacious pockets, carried the other two in his fist, and made his way hastily down the mountain, keeping a watchful eye over his shoulder lest the mother lynx should happen back from her hunting and attempt a rescue. He made his way to a little well-like pool, a sort of pocket of black water in a cleft of the granite, which he had passed and noted curiously on his upward climb. Into this icy oblivion he dropped the baby lynxes in a bunch, with a stone tied to them—as he was wont to do with superfluous kittens at home. "Good riddance to that rubbish!" he muttered, as he strode on down the mountain.

But, underestimating the strength of these wild kittens, he had tied the string carelessly. In their drowning struggles the string had come undone, and the victims, freed from the stone, had risen to the surface. But by this time they were too weak for any effectual effort at escape; and in their blindness they could not find the shore. Two, by chance, drifted upon a lip of rock, where they sprawled half awash and were presently dead of the chill. The

other two sank again into the black depths.

Their puny struggles had not long been stilled—five minutes, perhaps, or ten—when the mother lynx arrived at the edge of the pool. Returning to her den and finding her little ones gone, the footprints and the trail of the woodsman had told her the story. Crouching flat, she had glared about her with terrible eyes, as if thinking that the ravisher might yet be within reach. Then, after one long, agonized sniff at the spot where her young had lain, she had sped away noiselessly down the steep, running with nose to the blatant trail and wild eyes peering ahead.

At the edge of the pool she stopped. Though Hatch's trail went on, she saw at once, from his halt at the edge, that something had happened here. In a moment her piercing eyes detected those two little limp bodies lying awash on the lip of granite.

Eagerly she called to them, with a harsh but poignant mew; and in two prodigious leaps she was leaning over them. With tender, mothering lips she lifted them from the water by their necks, curled herself about them for warmth, and fell to licking them passionately with soft murmurs of caress. She did not notice, apparently, the absence of the other two. Or perhaps her sense of numbers was defective, and she could not count. However that may be, she devoted herself with concentrated fervor, for some minutes, to the two limp and bedraggled little forms, striving passionately to stir them back to life. Then, as if realizing on the sudden that they were dead, she almost spurned them from her, sprang to her feet with a long yowl, and ran around the pool till she again picked up John Hatch's trail.

It was about four in the afternoon when John Hatch crossed the last of the half-bare slopes, with their scant growth of poplar and sapling birch which fringed the foot of Old Sugarloaf, and plunged into the dark spruce woods which separated him from his lonely farm on the banks of Burnt Brook. His trail was now an easy one, an old and moss-grown "tote-road" of the lumbermen. It was some ten or a dozen years since this region had been lumbered over, and by this time the young timber which had then been left as below the legal diameter for cutting, had grown to the full and stately stature of the spruce.

The great trees, however, had not yet had time to kill out the bushy undergrowth which had sprung up luxuriantly in the wake of the choppers, and consequently the forest on either side of the trail was a dense jungle to the height of six or eight feet.

John Hatch knew that the mother lynx, had he caught her at home, would have put up a valiant fight in defense of her babies. He despised all lynxes as cordially as he hated them; but he knew that a mother of almost any breed may do desperate things for her young. Having his ax with him, however, and the nicest of woodsman's skill in using it, he had had no misgivings at any moment, and now that the kittens were at the bottom of the pool, he dismissed the whole matter from his mind. There remained nothing but a dim satisfaction that four dangerous enemies to his sheep had been thus easily disposed of.

Suddenly, without knowing why, John Hatch stopped in his stride, gripped his ax instinctively, and glanced over his shoulder. The skin of his cheeks, beneath the grizzled stubble, crept curiously. He felt that he was being followed. He peered deep into the undergrowth, first on one side, then on the other. No living thing was to be seen, except a little black-and-white woodpecker, which slipped behind a hemlock trunk and peered around at him with inquiring eyes.

"Guess I've got the creeps!" growled Hatch. Whirling angrily on his heel, he resumed his long, loose-kneed, woodsman's stride.

But he could not get rid of that sensation of being followed. For a long time he resolutely ignored it. There was nothing in the woods that he had need to fear. He knew there was no wild beast, not even the biggest bear, between Old Sugarloaf and the Miramichi that would be so rash as to seek a quarrel with him. As for the mother lynx, she had passed out of his mind, so ingrained and deep was his scorn of all such "varmin'." But presently the insistence of that unseen presence on his trail became too strong for him, and with a curse he turned his head. There was nothing there. He bounded into the wood on the left of the track, parting the undergrowth furiously with both arms outstretched before his face. To his eyes, still full of the sunlight, the brown-green gloom was almost blackness for the moment. But he seemed to see, or imagined he saw, a flitting



DRAWN BY PAUL BRADSHAW

He saw the dog get up quickly and go trotting off homeward, with an air of having been kicked

shadow—whether darker or lighter than its surroundings he could not have told—fade into the obscurity around it.

Hatch turned back into the homeward trail. "It's nawthin' but that lynx," he muttered. "An' I'm a fool, an' no mistake."

The mystery thus satisfactorily solved, he swung on contentedly for the next mile or so. Then once more that uncanny impression of being trailed began to tingle in his cheeks and stir the roots of the hair on his neck. He laughed impatiently and gave no further heed to it. But, in spite of himself, a peculiar picture began to burn itself into his consciousness. He realized a pair of round, pale, baleful eyes, piercing with pain and vengeful fury, fixed upon him. Knowing well that the beast would never dare to spring upon him, he spat upon the ground in irritated contempt. At the same time he was nettled at its presumption in thus dogging his trail.

"I'll bring my gun along next time I'm over to Sugarloaf," he murmured; "an' I'll put a ball through her guts if she don't keep off my trail."

His vexation was not mollified by the fact that when he came out from the spruce woods into the open pastures of his clearing, and saw his farmyard below him basking in the sun, he felt a distinct sense of relief. This was an indignity that he could never have dreamed of. That a lynx should be able to cause him a moment's apprehension! It was inconceivable. Yet—he was glad of the open. He resolved to get out all his traps and snares at once and settle scores with the beast without delay.

That night, however, he dismissed the idea of traps from his mind as making too much of the matter. As he sat by his kitchen fire, smoking comfortably, his chores all done up, the battle-scarred dog asleep beside his chair, the forgiving tabby curled up on his knee, and the twang of night-hawks in a clear sky coming in through the open window with the fresh smell of the dew, he chuckled at his own folly.

"I sure *did* have the creeps," he explained to the cat, who opened one eye at him and shut it again noncommittally. "But I ain't agoin' to have 'em agin. No sir-ee!" But the scarred dog, a lean black-and-tan mongrel with some collie strain revealed in his feathering and in his long, narrow jaw, stirred uneasily in his sleep and whimpered.

John Hatch had two cows and a yoke of red steers. At this kindly time of year they all stayed out at pasture day and night with the sheep, in the upper burnt lot—a ragged field of hillocks, and short, sweet-grass, and fire-blackened stumps slowly rotting. Along the left of the field, the dark spruce woods came down close to the zig-zag snake fence of split rails which bounded Hatch's clearing. At this point were the pasture bars which served the purpose of a gate; and here, about sundown, the two cows stood lowing softly, waiting for Hatch to come with his tin milk-pails.

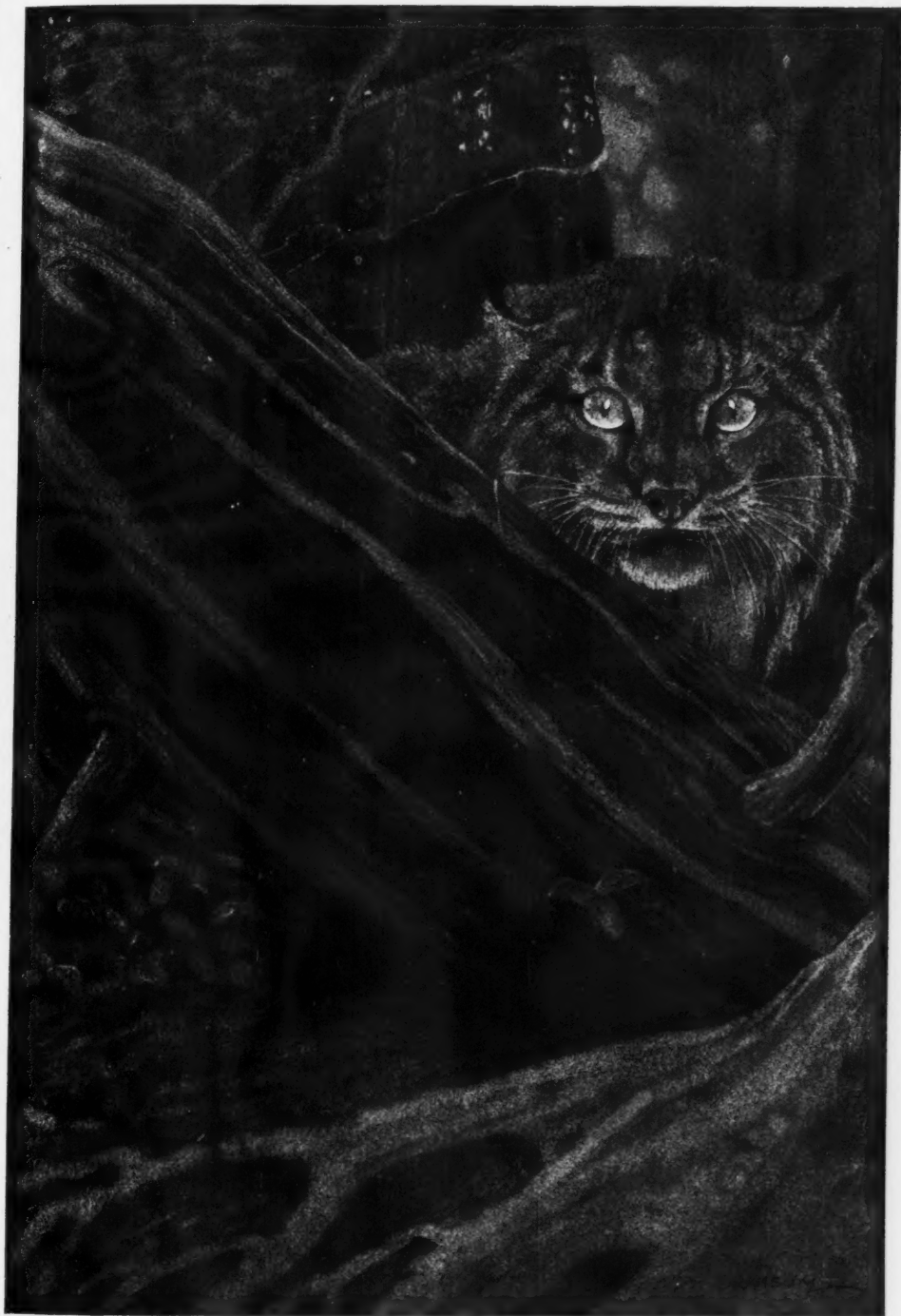
On the evening following Hatch's trip up Old Sugarloaf, he was a little later than usual at his milking, and the pasture was all afloat in violet dusk as he dropped the two upper bars at one end and swung his long legs over with a clatter of his two tin pails. He picked up his three-legged stool, hitched himself under the flank of the nearest cow, gripped a pail between his knees; and in a moment began the soft, frothy thunder of the two white streams pulsating down alternately into the tin. The dog—who was not *persona grata* to the cows, because he had at times to rebuke them for trespassing on the oat field or the turnip patch—sat upon his haunches at the other side of the fence and watched the milking indifferently.

The first cow was milked and had wandered off to feed, and Hatch was almost through with the second, when, through the bars, he saw the dog get up quickly and go trotting off homeward, with an air of having been kicked.

A moment later the cow snorted and gave a jump which would have upset a less wary milker than John Hatch. She ran away down the field, tossing her horns, to join her companion and the steers. And Hatch was left sitting there with the pail between his legs, staring fixedly into the dark woods. For the fraction of a second he half fancied that a shadow flitted across them. Then he knew it was an illusion of his eyes.

Very angry—too angry to find expression in even the most unparliamentary of speech—he rose to his feet, set the pail of milk beside its fellow, grabbed the sturdy milking-stool by one leg, vaulted the fence, and plunged into the woods.

But there was nothing there, as far as he could see. Once more the fine hairs crept and tingled up and down the back of his



DRAWN BY PAUL BRANSON

All through the summer and the autumn this mysterious trailing went on

The Shadows and John Hatch

neck. He stalked indignantly back to the fence, vaulted it, flung down the milking-stool, grabbed up the milk-pails so roughly that the contents slopped over onto his homespun breeches, and set off for home. Not once did he allow himself to look back, though, to his impatient wrath, he felt sure all the way down the lane that malevolent eyes were watching him through the fence.

On the following day John Hatch spent most of the time in the woods with his gun, hunting the coverts for miles about the clearing. He saw nothing more formidable than a couple of indifferent skunks, and a surly old porcupine which rattled its quills at him. He wanted to shoot the skunks, as "varmin" inimical to his chickens; but he refrained lest he should give the alarm to the unknown enemy whom he was hunting. He searched assiduously for anything like a hostile trail; but there had been no rain lately and the ground was hard, and the dead, brown spruce-needles formed a carpet which took little impression from wary paws, and he gained no clue whatever. He turned homeward, somewhat relieved, toward milking-time. But before he reached the edge of the woods, once more came that warning and uncanny creep at the roots of his hairs.

In a flash of fury he wheeled, and fired into the thickets just behind him. He could have sworn that a gray shadow flitted away behind the gray trunks. But his most minute search could discover no trail save here and there, a light disturbance of the spruce-needles. It was easy for him to infer, however, with his instinct and his woodcraft, that these disturbances were due to the softly padded paws of a lynx.

He bared his teeth in scorn, and on the following day he fairly sowed that section of the forest with snares and traps. Within a week he had taken a weasel, three woodchucks, half a dozen skunks, and thirteen rabbits. Then, feeling that the game was carried on under a surveillance which he could neither locate nor evade, he suddenly quitted it, and fell back upon an attitude of contemptuous indifference. But he cleared away all the undergrowth in the woods within fifty yards of the pasture bars, because he would not have the cows scared at milking.

As long as Hatch kept out of the woods, or the very immediate neighborhood of them, he was quite untroubled by the sense

of the haunting shadow and the unseen, watching eyes. For a time, now, he did keep out of them, being fully occupied with his tasks on the little farm. Then came a day when he found that he wanted poles. The best poles, as he knew, grew on the shores of a little lake some miles away, near the foot of Sugarloaf. But he thought he would make shift to do with the very inferior poles which grew along the edge of the wild meadow at the other side of the farm. At first he persuaded himself that his object in this was merely to save time. Then he realized that he was shrinking from the journey through the woods. Flushing with shame, he hitched his old sorrel mare to the drag, and set out after those superior poles which grew below Sugarloaf. But he took his gun along with him — which had not been, hitherto, by any means his invariable custom.

On the way out there occurred nothing unusual. The green summer woods seemed once more to John Hatch the old, friendly woods, with neither menace nor mystery to his rather unimaginative spirit. He whistled gaily over his chopping, while the old sorrel pastured comfortably in a patch of wild meadow by the lake. Well along in the afternoon he started homeward with a light heart, as many trimmed poles on his drag as the sorrel could comfortably haul.

The journey was uneventful. After a time, indeed, Hatch felt himself once more so completely at home in his familiar wilderness that the tension of his nerves relaxed, and the exasperating experiences of the past weeks were forgotten. He reached a turn of the wood road where it crested a rise about half a mile from his clearing, and saw his homely cabin with its farmyard and its fields basking in the low afternoon sunshine straight before him.

It was a comfortable picture, framed as in a narrow panel by the dark uprights of the spruce on either side of the mossy road. Hatch framed his lips to whistle in his satisfaction at the picture.

But the whistle wavered out in a thin breath—as he felt once more that hated creeping of the skin, that crawling at the back of his neck. He dropped the reins and snatched up his gun from where it lay on top of the load of poles. At the same moment the sedate old sorrel shied violently, almost knocking him over, and then



DRAWN BY PAUL BRANSON

He saw Jeff with one lynx down, slashing at his throat, while the other clung upon his back

The Shadows and John Hatch

started on a wild gallop down the road, spilling the poles in every direction.

With a crisp *oak*, Hatch burst through the undergrowth which fringed the road. He fancied that he saw a gray shadow fading off among the gray trunks, and he fired at once. He was a good shot, and he felt sure that he had scored a hit. In keen exultation he ran forward, expecting to find his enemy stretched on the spruce-needles. But there was nothing there.

Outwardly cold, but boiling within, Hatch stalked slowly homeward, ignoring the scattered poles along the way. He felt no more of the presence of the dogging shadow—presumably because it had withdrawn itself at the sound of the gunshot. Arrived at home he found the old sorrel, with the empty drag, waiting at the gate to be let in, and Jeff, who always stayed at home to guard the house, wagging his tail interrogatively beside her.

John Hatch looked at the dog musingly. "Jeff," said he, "if ye warn't so blankety blank *blank* afeerd o' lynxes, ye'd help me a sight in runnin' the varmin down. But ye ain't got no nerve left. Reckon I'll have to take ye into the woods now an' agin, kind of fur discipline, an' help ye to git it back. Ye ain't much account now, Jeff."

And the dog, feeling the reproach in Hatch's quaint speech, dropped his tail and pretended he had business behind the barn.

After this, when Hatch's affairs took him into the woods, Jeff went with him. But he went unhappily, crowding at his master's heels, with head and ears and tail one unanimous protest. To Hatch these expeditions sometimes proved uneventful, for sometimes the hostile shadows seemed to be off somewhere else, and too occupied to follow Hatch's trail. On such occasions, Hatch knew that the unseen surveillance was withdrawn, because he had none of those warning "creeps" at the nape of his neck. But, to Jeff, every covert or thicket within a radius of fifty yards was an ambush for lynxes, and only at his master's heels did he feel secure from their swift and eviscerating claws. When he saw John Hatch stop abruptly, glare about him, and plunge into the underbush, then Jeff would try to get between his legs, an effort not helpful to Hatch's marksmanship or to his temper. And the shadows—for there seemed to John Hatch to be two of them haunting

him now—would fade off elusively into the environing and soundless shade.

All through the summer and the autumn this mysterious trailing went on, till Hatch, disgusted by the futility of his attempts to shake it off, assumed indifference, and pretended to himself that he rather liked being haunted. But in the depths of his heart he grew more and more uneasy. Such vigilant and untiring vindictiveness on the part of creatures which are wont to shun all human neighborhood with an incorrigible savagery of shyness, was unnatural. It seemed to him to suggest a very madness of hate, an obsession which might one day culminate in some deed of desperation, unheard of among lynxes.

When, however, the winter had once settled in with full rigor, Hatch found that he was being shadowed with less and less insistence. He inferred at once that this was because his foes were now forced to spend most of their time in foraging for their own livelihood, and he drew a wry face of self-disgust as he realized the depth of his relief. As the winter advanced, and the cold bit fiercer, and the snow gathered as if to bury the wilderness-world away from sight forever, it came at last to seem as if the unknown purpose of the avengers were forgotten. No more, upon his tramps on snow-shoes through the muffled woods, did John Hatch feel those admonitory creepings of his flesh; and presently he forgot all about the haunting shadows and their menace.

John Hatch's chief occupation during the winter months was the chopping and hauling of cord-wood for the settlements. On a certain day he was enjoying himself greatly in the felling of a huge birch. The crisp, still air was like wine in his veins. The ax was keen, and under the bite of its rhythmic strokes the big white chips flew off keenly. Sitting on the wood-sled at a safe distance, Jeff watched the chopping with alert interest, while the old sorrel dreamed with drooping head and steamed in the dry frost. The tree, cut nearly through, was just beginning to lean, just tottering to its fall, when once more John Hatch was conscious of that hated crawling in the skin of his cheeks, the lifting of the hairs on his neck. With a savage curse he wheeled about, swinging up his ax. With a soft, swishing, crackling roar, down came the tree. It fell true, as he had chopped it,

so he did not have to spring out of its path, or even to glance at it. But as it fell it crashed heavily upon a dead branch in a neighboring tree. The dead branch flew hurtling through the air, and smote John Hatch violently on the back of the head. He dropped like a log, and lay quite still in the chip-strewn snow.

There was a clatter of chains and harness, as the old sorrel, sniffing the enemy, started at a gallop for home. Jeff, seeing that his master was down, sprang to his side, whinnying, and fell to licking frantically at his unconscious face. Getting no response, he suddenly remembered the taint in the air which was already making his back bristle. Bestriding Hatch's body, he turned his head with a savage snarl. He could not see the enemy, but he smelled them all too clearly. With ears laid flat to the skull, lips curled up from his long, white teeth, and half-open eyes flaming green, he glared at the spruce thicket whence that menacing scent came to his nostrils. With the responsibility for his master's care thus suddenly thrust upon him, his fear of lynxes vanished.

The noise of the old sorrel's flight died away down the white wood-road, and for several minutes nothing stirred. The lynxes had long practised patience, and for all their hate they were prudent. They could not make out, at first, why their enemy, who was always so vehemently active, should now be lying so still there in the snow. But wild animals are usually quick to realize when an enemy or a quarry has been disabled. They presently concluded that here, at last, was the opportunity for which they had been waiting. For the dog they had nothing but scorn. They had mauled and beaten him once before. They had grown accustomed to his frank terror of them. Now he did not enter into their calculations.

One from each side of the spruce thicket, they crept stealthily forth, crouching low, their ears laid back, their round, pale eyes glaring coldly from their round, gray, cruel faces. Their big, padded paws went lightly over the snow. Very gradually they crept up, half expecting that John Hatch might spring to his feet any moment and rush at them with a roar. They had no great fear of his roars, however, having never known much hurt to come of them.

And all the time Jeff was tugging madly

at John Hatch's arm, adjuring him to wake and meet the peril.

Apparently satisfied, at length, that there was no trap laid for them in John Hatch's quiescence, the two lynxes ran forward swiftly and sprang at his neck. To their surprise, they were met by Jeff's teeth. With that lightning side-snap which he had inherited from his collie ancestors, the dog managed to slash both his opponents severely in the space of half a second. In a blaze of fury they fell upon him, both at once. A yelling tangle of claws and teeth and legs and fur surged and bounced upon John Hatch's body.

John Hatch slowly came to. The pandemonium of snarls and screeches that filled his ears bewildered him. He thought he was having a nightmare. His legs were held down, it seemed, by battling mountains. With a mighty effort he sat up. Then in a flash his wits came back to him. He saw Jeff with one lynx down, slashing at his throat, while the other clung upon his back and ripped him with its claws.

Bounding to his feet, he clutched this latter combatant with both hands by the scruff of the neck, whirled it around his head, and dashed it, yowling wildly, against a tree. Then he turned his attention to the other, which, though at a terrific disadvantage, was still raking Jeff murderously with its hinder claws.

Hatch grabbed up his ax. But he could find no chance to strike, lest he should injure the dog. At last, in desperation at seeing how Jeff was getting punished by those raking claws, he dropped the ax again and seized the beast by the hind legs. Dragging it out from under the astonished Jeff, he swung it several times about his head, and then launched it, sprawling and screeching, high through the air. As it landed he was upon it again, this time with the ax, and a straight, short-arm blow ended the matter. The other lynx, which was just recovering from its contact with the tree, saw that its mate was slain, and sped off among the trees, just escaping the ax which Hatch hurled after it.

Jeff was lying down in the snow, licking his outrageous wounds, and content to leave the finishing of the affair in his master's hands.

"I was mistaken in yeh, Jeff," said John Hatch, "an' I apologize handsome. Ye're sure some dawg."



DRAWN BY WORTH BREINHART

He was bending his shoulders for the heave that would lift it over the rim, when a sweet, taunting voice close behind him startled him cruelly. "How do you do, *little gentleman?*"

The Little Gentleman

"Better than 'Tom Sawyer,'" "the best ever," "can scarcely wait for the next one"—these are some of the expressions used by *Cosmopolitan* readers in writing to tell of the joy Mr. Tarkington's stories are giving them. Never, they say, has so real a boy been portrayed in fiction. We agree with them. In last month's story our young hero started in to enjoy his vacation. His family, in consequence, are prepared for the worst, but it is safe to say that their most fearful imaginings did not evoke any such "awfulness"—to use Mr. Schofield's expression—as here developed.

By Booth Tarkington

Author of "An Overwhelming Saturday," "Brothers of Angels," etc.

Illustrated by Worth Brehm

THE July sun was stinging hot outside the little barber shop next to the corner drug store, and Penrod Schofield, undergoing a *toilette* preliminary to his approaching twelfth birthday, was adhesive enough to retain upon his face much hair as it fell from the shears. There is a mystery here: the tonsorial processes are not unagreeable to manhood; in truth, they are soothing; but the hairs detached from a boy's head get into his eyes, his ears, his nose, his mouth, and down his neck, and he does everywhere itch excruciatingly. Wherefore he blinks, winks, weeps, twitches, condenses his countenance, and squirms; and perchance the barber's scissors clip more than intended—belike an outlying flange of ear.

"Um—muh—ow!" said Penrod, this thing having happened.

"D' I touch y' up a little?" inquired the barber, smiling falsely.

"Ooh—uh!" The boy in the chair offered inarticulate protest, as the wound was rubbed with alum.

"That don't hurt," said the barber. "You *will* get it, though, if you don't sit stiller," he continued, nipping in the bud any attempt on the part of his patient to think that he already had "it."

"Puff!" said Penrod, meaning no disrespect, but endeavoring to dislodge a temporary mustache from his lip.

"You ought to see how still that little Georgie Bassett sits," the barber went on

reprovingly. "I hear everybody says he's the best boy in town."

"Puff! Phirr!" There was a touch of intentional contempt in this.

"I haven't heard nobody around the neighborhood makin' no such remarks," added the barber, "about nobody of the name of Penrod Schofield."

"Well," said Penrod, clearing his mouth after a struggle, "who wants 'em to? Ouch!"

"I hear they call Georgie Bassett 'the little gentleman,'" ventured the barber provocatively, meeting with instant success.

"They better not call *me* that," returned Penrod truculently. "I'd like to hear anybody try. Just once, that's all! I bet they'd never try it ag— Ouch!"

"Why? What'd you do to 'em?"

"It's all right what I'd *do*! I bet they wouldn't want to call me that again long as they lived!"

"What'd you do if it was a little girl? You wouldn't hit her, would you?"

"Well I'd— Ouch!"

"You wouldn't hit a little girl, would you?" persisted the barber, gathering into his powerful fingers a mop of hair from the top of Penrod's head and pulling that suffering head into an unnatural position. "Doesn't the Bible say it ain't never right to hit the weak sex?"

"Ow! Say—look out!"

"So you'd go and punch a pore, weak, little girl, would you?" said the barber reprovingly.

The Little Gentleman

"Well, who said I'd hit her?" demanded the chivalrous Penrod. "I bet I'd *fix* her though, all right. She'd see!"

"You wouldn't call her names, would you?"

"No, I wouldn't! What hurt is it to call anybody names?"

"Is that *so*?" exclaimed the barber. "Then you was intending what I heard you hollering at Fisher's grocery delivery-wagon driver fer a favor, the other day when I was goin' by your house, was you? I reckon I better tell him, because he says to me, *afterwards*, if he ever lays eyes on you when you ain't in your own yard, he's goin' to do a whole lot o' things you ain't goin' to like! Yessir, that's what he says to *me*!"

"He better catch me first, I guess, before he talks so much."

"Well," resumed the barber, "that ain't sayin' what you'd do if a young lady ever walked up and called you a little gentleman. I want to hear what you'd do to her. I guess I know, though—come to think of it."

"What?" demanded Penrod.

"You'd sick that poor ole dog of yours on her cat, if she had one, I expect," guessed the barber derisively.

"No, I would not!"

"Well, what *would* you do?"

"I'd do enough. Don't worry about that!"

"Well, suppose it was a boy, then. What'd you do if a boy come up to you and says, 'Hello, little gentleman?'"

"He'd be lucky," said Penrod, with a sinister frown, "if he got home alive."

"Suppose it was a boy twice your size?"

"Just let him try," said Penrod ominously. "You just let him try. He'd never see daylight again—that's all!"

The barber dug ten active fingers into the helpless scalp before him and did his best to displace it, while the anguished Penrod, becoming instantly a seething crucible of emotion, misdirected his natural resentment into maddened brooding upon what he would do to a boy "twice his size" who should dare to call him "little gentleman." The barber shook him as his father had never shaken him; the barber buffeted him, rocked him frantically to and fro; the barber seemed to be trying to wring his neck, and Penrod saw himself in staggering zigzag pictures, destroying

large, screaming, fragmentary boys who had insulted him.

The torture stopped suddenly; and clenched, weeping eyes began to see again, while the barber applied cooling lotions which made Penrod smell like a colored housemaid's ideal.

"Now what," asked the barber, combing the reeking locks gently, "what would it make you so mad fer, to have somebody call you a little gentleman? It's a kind of a compliment, as it were, you might say. What would you want to hit anybody fer *that* fer?"

To the mind of Penrod, this question was without meaning or reasonableness. It was within neither his power nor his desire to analyze the process by which the phrase had become offensive to him, and was now rapidly assuming the proportions of an outrage. He knew only that his gorge rose at the thought of it.

"You just let 'em try it!" he said threateningly, as he slid down from the chair. And as he went out of the door, after further conversation on the same subject, he called back those warning words once more: "Just let 'em try it! Just once—that's all I ask 'em to. They'll find out what they *get*!"

The barber chuckled. Then a fly lit on the barber's nose and he slapped at it, and the slap missed the fly but did not miss the nose. The barber was irritated. At this moment his birdlike eye gleamed a gleam as it fell upon customers approaching: the prettiest little girl in the world, Marjorie Jones, leading by the hand her baby brother, Mitchy-Mitch, coming to have Mitchy-Mitch's hair clipped, against the heat.

It was a hot day and idle, with little to feed the mind—and the barber was a mischievous man with an irritated nose. He did his worst.

Meanwhile, the brooding Penrod pursued his homeward way—no great distance, but long enough for several one-sided conflicts with malign insulters made of thin air.

"You better *not* call me that!" he muttered. "You just try it, and you'll get what other people got when *they* tried it! You better not ack fresh with *me*! Oh, you *will*, will you?" He delivered a vicious kick full upon the shins of an iron fence-post, which suffered little, though Penrod instantly regretted his indiscretion.

"Oof!" he grunted, hopping; and went on, after bestowing a look of awful hostility upon the fence-post. "I guess you'll know better next time," he said, in parting, to this antagonist. "You just let me catch you around here again and I'll—" His voice sank to inarticulate but ominous murmurings. He was in a dangerous mood.

Nearing home, however, his belligerent spirit was diverted to happier interests by the discovery that some workmen had left a caldron of tar in the cross-street, close by his father's stable. He tested it, but found it inedible. Also, as a substitute for professional chewing-gum it was unsatisfactory, being insufficiently boiled down and too thin, though of a pleasant, lukewarm temperature. But it had an excess of one quality—it was sticky. It was the stickiest tar Penrod had ever used for any purposes whatsoever, and nothing upon which he wiped his hands served to rid them of it; neither his polka-dotted shirt-waist nor his knickerbockers; neither the fence, nor even Duke, his faithful dog, who came unthinkingly wagging out to greet him, and retired wiser.

Nevertheless, tar is tar. Much can be done with it, no matter what its condition; so Penrod lingered by the caldron, though, from a neighboring yard could be heard the voices of comrades, including that of the amiable Sam Williams, his ever congenial ally and close companion. On the ground about the caldron were scattered chips and sticks and bits of wood to the number of a great multitude. Penrod mixed quantities of this refuse into the tar, and interested himself in seeing how much of it he could keep moving in slow swirls upon the ebon surface.

Other surprises were arranged for the absent workmen. The caldron was almost full, and the surface of the tar near the rim. Penrod endeavored to ascertain how many pebbles and brickbats, dropped in, would cause an overflow. Laboring heartily to this end, he had almost accomplished it, when he received the suggestion for an experiment on a much larger scale. Embedded at the corner of a grass-plot across



"I hear they call Georgie Bassett 'the little gentleman,'" ventured the barber provocatively, meeting with instant success

the street, was a whitewashed stone, the size of a small watermelon and serving no purpose whatever save the questionable one of decoration. It was easily pried up with a stick; though getting it to the caldron tested the full strength of the ardent laborer. Instructed to perform such a task, he would have sincerely maintained its impossibility; but now, as it was unbidden, and promised rather destructive results, he set about it with unconquerable energy, feeling certain that he would be rewarded with a mighty splash. Perspiring, grunting vehemently, his back aching and all muscles strained, he progressed in short stages until the big stone lay at the base of the caldron. He rested a moment, panting, then lifted the stone, and was bending his shoulders for the heave that would lift it over the rim, when a sweet, taunting voice close behind him startled him cruelly.

"How do you do, *little gentleman*?"

Penrod dropped the stone; it grazed his left toe injuriously. He hopped, squawked,

and shouted, "Shut up, you dern fool!" purely from instinct, even before his about-face made him aware who had so spitefully addressed him.

It was beautiful Marjorie Jones. Always dainty, and prettily dressed, she was in speckless and starchy white to-day, and a refreshing sight she was, with the new-shorn and powerfully scented Mitchy-Mitch clinging to her hand. They had stolen up behind the toiler, and now stood laughing together in sweet merriment. Long worshiped of Penrod was fair Marjorie, but ever elusive, often cold, and sometimes violently hostile; and now in her wonderful eyes there shone a consciousness of new powers for his undoing.

"Oh, oh!" she cried, mocking his pained outcry. "What a way for a *little gentleman* to talk! Little gentlemen don't say wicked——"

"Marjorie!" Penrod, enraged and dismayed by attack from so insidious a quarter, felt himself stung beyond all endurance. Insult from her was bitterer to endure than from any other. "Don't you call me that again!"

"Why not, *little gentleman*?"

He stamped his foot. "You better stop!"

Marjorie sent into his furious face her lovely, spiteful laughter.

"Little gentleman, little gentleman, little gentleman!" she said deliberately. "How's the little gentleman, this afternoon? Hello, little gentleman!"

Penrod, quite beside himself, danced eccentrically. "Dry up!" he howled. "Dry up, dry up, dry up, dry up!"

Mitchy-Mitch shouted with delight and applied a finger to the side of the caldron—a finger immediately snatched away and wiped upon a handkerchief by his fastidious sister.

"'Tittle gellamun!" said Mitchy-Mitch.

"You better look out!" Penrod whirled upon this small offender with grim satisfaction. Here was at least something male that could, without dishonor, be held responsible. "You say that again, and I'll give you the worst——"

"You will *not*!" snapped Marjorie, instantly vitriolic. "He'll say just whatever he wants to, and he'll say it just as *much* as he wants to. Say it again, Mitchy-Mitch!"

"'Tittle gellamun!" said Mitchy-Mitch promptly.

"Ow-yah!" Penrod's tone-production was becoming affected by his mental condition. "You say that again, and I'll——"

"Go on, Mitchy-Mitch," cried Marjorie. "He can't do a thing. He don't *dare*! Say it some more, Mitchy-Mitch—say it a whole lot!"

Mitchy-Mitch, his small, fat face shining with confidence in his immunity, complied.

"'Tittle gellamun!" he squeaked mal-evolently. "'Tittle gellamun! 'Tittle gellamun! 'Tittle gellamun!"

The desperate Penrod bent over the white-washed rock, lifted it, and then—outdoing Porthos, John Ridd, and Ursus in one miraculous burst of strength—heaved it into the air.

Marjorie screamed.

But it was too late. The big stone descended into the precise midst of the caldron, and Penrod got his mighty splash. It was far, far beyond his expectations.

Spontaneously there were grand and awful effects—volcanic spectacles of night-mare and eruption. A black sheet of eccentric shape rose out of the caldron and descended upon the three children, who had no time to evade it.

After it fell, Mitchy-Mitch, who stood nearest the caldron, was the thickest, though there was enough for all. Bre'r Rabbit would have fled from any of them.

When Marjorie and Mitchy-Mitch got their breath, they used it vocally; and seldom have more penetrating sounds issued from human throats. Coincidentally, Marjorie, quite baresark, laid hands upon the largest stick within reach and fell upon Penrod with blind fury. He had the presence of mind to flee, and they went round and round the caldron, while Mitchy-Mitch feebly endeavored to follow—his appearance, in this pursuit, being pathetically like that of a bug fished out of an ink-well, alive but discouraged.

Attracted by the riot, Samuel Williams made his appearance vaulting a fence, and was immediately followed by little Maurice Levy and Georgie Bassett. They started incredulously at the extraordinary spectacle before them.

"Little GEN-TIL-MUN!" shrieked Marjorie, with a wild stroke that landed full upon Penrod's tarry cap.

"Oooch!" bleated Penrod.

"It's Penrod!" shouted Sam Williams,

recognizing him by the voice. For an instant he had been in some doubt.

"Penrod Schofield!" exclaimed Georgie Bassett, the best boy in town, "*what* does this mean?" That was Georgie's style, and had helped to win him his title.

Marjorie leaned, panting, upon her stick. "I cu-called—uh—him—oh!" she sobbed; "I called him a lul-little—oh—gentleman, that's—oh—all! And oh—oh—oh, lullook at my du-dress! Lul-look at Mumitchy—oh—Mitch—oh!"

Unexpectedly, she smote again—with results—and then, seizing the undistinguishable hand of Mitchy-Mitch, ran wailing homeward down the street.

"Little gentleman?" said Georgie Bassett, with some evidences of disturbed complacency. "Why, that's what they call me!"

"Yes, and you *are* one, too!" shouted the maddened Penrod. "But you better not let anybody call *me* that! I've stood enough around here for one day, and you can't run over *me*, Georgie Bassett. Just you put that in your gizzard and smoke it!"

"Anybody has a perfect right," said Georgie, with dignity, "to call a person a little gentleman. There's lots of names nobody ought to call, but this one's a *nice*—"

"You better look out!"

Unavenged bruises were distributed all over Penrod, both upon his body and upon his spirit. Driven by subtle forces, he had dipped his hands in catastrophe and disaster: it was not for a Georgie Bassett to beard him. Penrod was about to run amuck.

"I haven't called you a little gentleman yet," said Georgie. "I only said it. Anybody's got a right to say it."

"Not around *me*! You just try it again and—"

"I shall say it," returned Georgie, "all I please. Anybody in this town has a right to say 'little gentleman.'"

Bellowing insanely, Penrod plunged his right hand into the caldron, rushed upon Georgie, and made awful work of his hair and features.

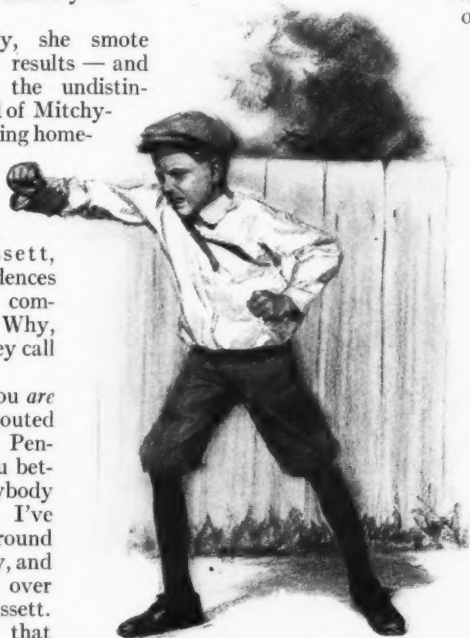
Alas, it was but the beginning! Sam Williams and Maurice Levy screamed with delight, and, simultaneously infected, danced about the struggling pair, shouting frantically:

"Little gentleman! Little gentleman! Sick him, Georgie! Sick him, little gentleman! Little gentleman! Little gentleman!"

The infuriated outlaw turned upon them with blows and more tar, which gave Georgie Bassett his opportunity, and later seriously impaired the purity of his fame. Feeling himself hopelessly tarred, he dipped both hands repeatedly into the caldron and applied his gatherings to Penrod. It was bringing coals to Newcastle, but it helped to assuage the just wrath of Georgie.

The four boys gave a fine imitation of the Laocoon group complicated by an extra figure—frantic splutterings and chokings; strange cries and stranger words issued from this tangle; hands dipped lavishly into the inexhaustible reservoir of tar, with more and more picturesque results. The caldron had been elevated upon bricks and was not perfectly balanced, and under a heavy impact of the struggling group it lurched and went partly over, pouring forth a Stygian tide which formed a deep pool in the gutter.

It was the fate of Master Roderick Bitts,



The brooding Penrod pursued his homeward way—no great distance, but long enough for several one-sided conflicts with malign insulters made of thin air

an exclusive and immaculate person, to make his appearance upon the chaotic scene at this juncture. All in the cool of a white "sailor suit," he turned aside from the path of duty—which led straight to the house of a maiden aunt—and paused to hop with joy upon the sidewalk. A repeated epithet, continuously half panted, half squawked, somewhere in the nest of gladiators, caught his ear, and he took it up excitedly, not knowing why.

"Little gentleman!" shouted Roderick, jumping up and down in childish glee. "Little gentleman! Little gentleman! Lit—"

A frightful figure tore itself free from the group, encircled this innocent bystander with a black arm and hurled him headlong. Full-length and flat on his face went Roderick, into the Stygian pool. The frightful figure was Penrod. Instantly, the pack flung themselves upon him again, and, carrying them with him, he went over upon Roderick, who from that instant was as active a belligerent as any there.

Thus began the Great Tar Fight, the origin of which proved, afterward, so difficult for parents to trace, owing to the opposing accounts of the combatants. Marjorie said Penrod began it; Penrod said Mitchy-Mitch began it; Sam Williams said Georgie Bassett began it; Georgie and Maurice Levy said Penrod began it; Roderick Bitts, who had not recognized his first assailant, said Sam Williams began it.

Nobody thought of accusing the barber. But the barber did not begin it; it was the fly on the barber's nose that began it—though, of course, something else began the fly. Somehow, we never manage to hang the real offender.

The end came only with the arrival of Penrod's mother, who had been having a painful conversation by telephone with Mrs. Jones, the mother of Marjorie, and came forth to seek an errant son. It is a mystery how she was able to pick out her own, for, by the time she got there, his voice was too hoarse to be recognizable.

Mr. Schofield's version of things was that Penrod was insane. "He's a stark, raving lunatic!" declared the father, descending to the library from a before-dinner interview with the outlaw, that evening. "I'd send him to military school, but I don't believe they'd take him. Do you know why he says all that awfulness happened?"

"When Margaret and I were trying to scrub him," responded Mrs. Schofield wearily, "he said 'everybody' had been calling him names."

"Names!" snorted her husband. "'Little gentleman!' That's the vile epithet they called him! And because of it he wrecks the peace of six homes!"

"*Sh!* Yes; he told us about it," said Mrs. Schofield, moaning. "He told us several hundred times, I should guess, though I didn't count. He's got it fixed in his head, and we couldn't get it out. All we could do was to put him in the closet. He'd have gone out again after those boys if we hadn't. I don't know *what* to make of him!"

"He's a mystery to *me!*" said her husband. "And he refuses to explain why he objects to being called 'little gentleman.' Says he'd do the same thing—and worse—if anybody dared to call him that again. He said if the President of the United States called him that he'd try to whip him. How long did you have him locked up in the closet?"

"*Sh!*" said Mrs. Schofield warningly. "About two hours; but I don't think it softened his spirit at all, because when I took him to the barber's to get his hair clipped again on account of the tar in it, Sammy Williams and Maurice Levy were there for the same reason, and they just *whispered*, 'Little gentleman'—and Penrod began fighting with them right before me, and it was really all the barber and I could do to drag him away from them. The barber was very kind about it, but Penrod——"

"I tell you he's a lunatic!" Mr. Schofield would have said the same thing of a Frenchman infuriated by the epithet "camel." The philosophy of insult needs expounding.

"*Sh!*" said Mrs. Schofield. "It does seem a kind of frenzy."

"Why on earth should any sane person mind being called——"

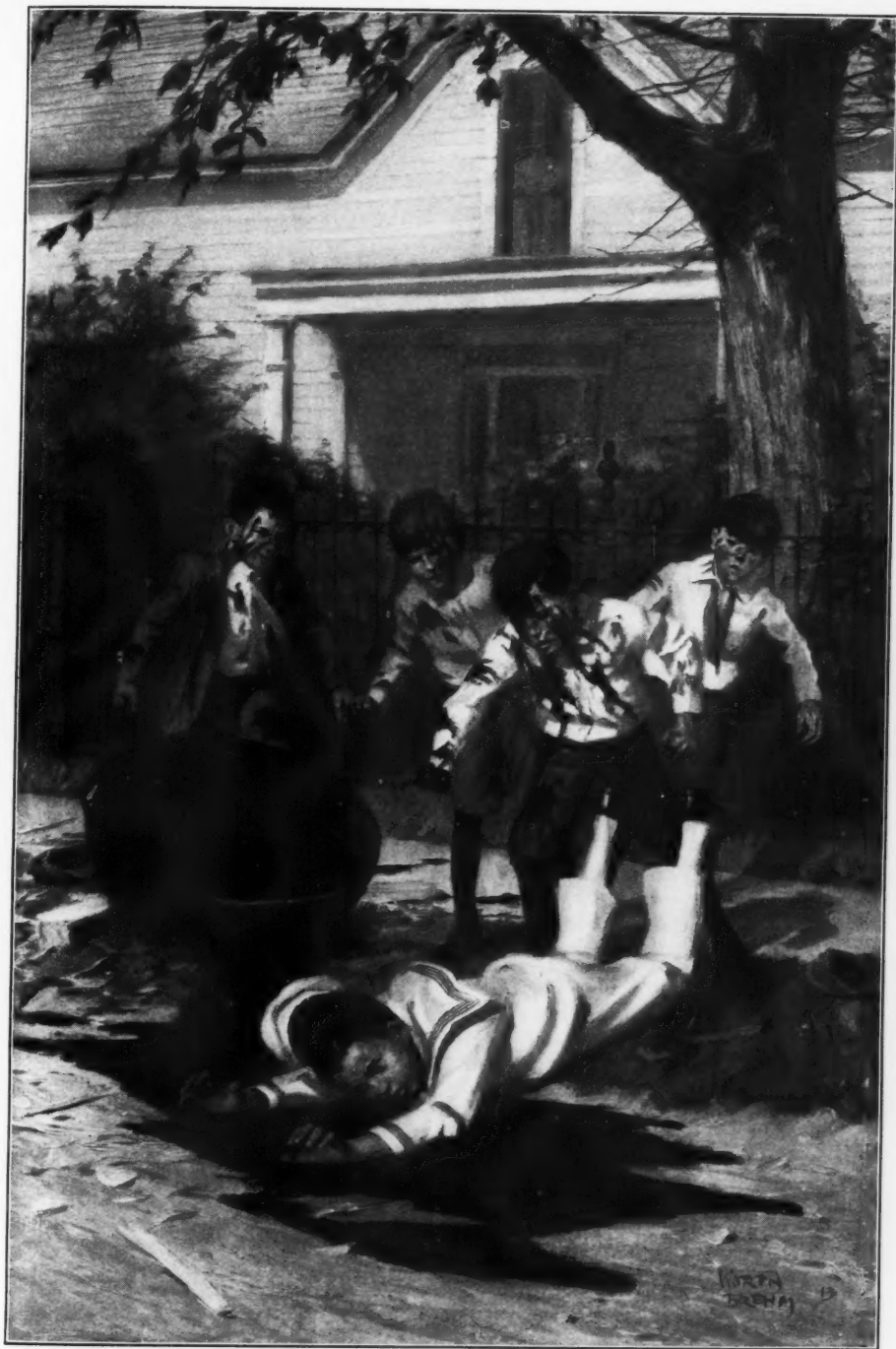
"*Sh!*" said Mrs. Schofield. "It's beyond *me*."

"What are you *sh-ing* me for?" demanded Mr. Schofield explosively.

"*Sh!*" said Mrs. Schofield. "It's Mr. Kinosling, the new rector of Saint Joseph's."

"Where?"

"*Sh!* On the front porch with Margaret; he's going to stay for dinner. I do hope——"



DRAWN BY WORTH BREHM

Full-length and flat on his face went Roderick, into the Stygian pool

"Bachelor, isn't he?"

"Yes——"

"Our minister was speaking of him, the other day," said Mr. Schofield, "and he didn't seem so terribly impressed."

"Sh! Yes; about thirty, and of course so superior to most of Margaret's friends—boys home from college. Young Robert Williams has begun coming again; but Mr. Kinosling seems very much interested in her." She paused to muse. "I think Margaret likes him; he's so different, too. It's the third time he's dropped in this week, and I——"

"Well," said Mr. Schofield grimly, "if you and Margaret want him to come again, you'd better not let him see Penrod."

"But he's asked to see him; he seems interested in meeting all the family. And Penrod nearly always behaves fairly well at table." She paused, and then put to her husband a question referring to his interview with Penrod up-stairs. "Did you—did you—do it?"

"No," he answered gloomily. "No, I didn't, but——" He was interrupted by a violent crash of china and metal in the kitchen, a shriek from Della, the cook, and the outrageous voice of Penrod. The well-informed Della, ill-inspired to set up for a wit, had ventured to address the scion of the house roguishly as 'little gentleman,' and Penrod, by means of the rapid elevation of his right foot, had removed from her supporting hands a laden tray. Both parents started for the kitchen, Mr. Schofield completing his interrupted sentence on the way.

"But I will, now!"

The rite thus promised was hastily but accurately performed in that apartment most distant from the front porch, and twenty minutes later Penrod descended to dinner. The Reverend Mr. Kinosling had asked for the pleasure of meeting him, and it had been decided that the only course possible was to cover up the scandal for the present, and to offer an undisturbed and smiling family surface to the gaze of the visitor.

Scorched but not bowed, the smoldering Penrod was led forward for the social formulæ. The punishment just undergone had but made his haughty and unyielding soul the more stalwart in revolt; he was unconquered. Every time the one intolerable insult had been offered him, his resent-

ment had become the hotter, his vengeance the more instant and furious. And, still burning with outrage but upheld by the conviction of right, he was determined to continue to the last drop of his blood the defense of his honor, whenever it should be assailed and no matter how powerful or august the forces that attacked it. In all ways, he was a very sore boy.

During the brief ceremony of presentation, his usually inscrutable countenance wore an expression interpreted by his father as one of insane obstinacy, while Mrs. Schofield found it an incentive to inward prayer. The fine graciousness of Mr. Kinosling, however, was unimpaired by the glare of virulent suspicion given him by this little brother. Mr. Kinosling mistook it for a natural curiosity concerning one who might possibly become, in time, a member of the family. He patted Penrod upon the head, which was, for many reasons, in no condition to be patted with any pleasure to the pattee. Penrod felt himself in the presence of a new enemy.

"How do you do, my little lad," said Mr. Kinosling. "I trust we shall become fast friends."

To the ear of his little lad, it seemed he said, "A trost we shall bick-home fawst frainds." Mr. Kinosling's pronunciation was, in fact, slightly precious; and the little lad, simply mistaking it for some cryptic form of mockery of himself, assumed a manner and expression which argued so ill for the proposed friendship that Mrs. Schofield hastily interposed the suggestion of dinner, and the small procession went in to the dining-room.

"It has been a delicious day," said Mr. Kinosling, presently, "warm but balmy." With a benevolent smile he addressed Penrod, who sat opposite him. "I suppose, little gentleman, you have been indulging in the usual outdoor sports of vacation?"

Penrod laid down his fork and glared, open-mouthed, at Mr. Kinosling.

"You'll have another slice of breast of the chicken?" Mr. Schofield inquired, loudly and quickly.

"A lovely day!" exclaimed Margaret, with equal promptitude and emphasis. "Lovely, oh, lovely! Lovely!"

"Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!" said Mrs. Schofield, and after a glance at Penrod which confirmed her impression that he intended to say something, she continued,

"Yes, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!"

Penrod closed his mouth and sank back in his chair—and his relatives took breath.

Mr. Kinosling looked pleased. This responsive family, with its ready enthusiasm made the kind of audience he liked. He passed a delicate white hand gracefully over his tall, baldish head, and smiled indulgently.

"Youth relaxes in summer," he said. "Boyhood is the age of relaxation; one is playful, light, free, unfettered. One runs and leaps and enjoys oneself with one's little companions. It is good for the little lads to play with their friends; they jostle, push, and wrestle, and simulate little, happy struggles with one another in harmless conflict. The young muscles are toughening. It is good. Boyish chivalry develops, enlarges, expands. The young learn quickly, intuitively, spontaneously. They perceive the obligations of *noblesse oblige*. They begin to comprehend the necessity of caste and its requirements. They learn what birth means—ah, that is, they learn what it means to be well born. They learn courtesy in their games; they learn politeness, consideration for one another in their pastimes, amusements, lighter occupations. I make it my pleasure to join them often, for I sympathize with them in all their little wholesome joys as well as in their little bothers and perplexities. I understand them, you see; and let me tell you it is no easy matter to understand the little lads and lassies." He sent to each listener his beaming glance, and, permitting it to come to rest upon Penrod, inquired,

"And what do you say to that, little gentleman?"

Mr. Schofield uttered a stentorian cough. "More? You'd better have some more chicken! More! Do!"

"More chicken!" urged Margaret simultaneously. "Do please! Please! More! Do! More!"

"Beautiful, beautiful," began Mrs. Schofield. "Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful——"

It is not known in what light Mr. Kinosling viewed the expression of Penrod's face. Perhaps he mistook it for awe; perhaps he received no impression at all of its extraordinary quality. He was a rather self-engrossed young man, just then engaged in a double occupation, for he not only talked but supplied from his own consciousness a critical though favorable auditor as well, which, of course, kept him quite busy. Besides, it is oftener than is suspected the case that extremely peculiar expressions upon the countenances of boys are entirely overlooked and suggest nothing to the minds of the people staring straight at them. Certainly Penrod's expression, which, to the perception of his family, was perfectly horrible, caused not the faintest perturbation in the breast of Mr. Kinosling.

Mr. Kinosling waived the chicken, and continued to talk.

"Yes, I think I may claim to understand boys," he said, smiling



WARTH
DRENN

He patted Penrod upon the head, which was, for many reasons, in no condition to be patted with any pleasure to the pattee. Penrod felt himself in the presence of a new enemy

The Little Gentleman

thoughtfully. "One has been a boy oneself. Ah, it is not all playtime! I hope our little gentleman here does not overwork himself at his Latin, at his Classics, as I did, so that at the age of eight years I was compelled to wear glasses. We must be careful not to strain the little eyes at his scholar's tasks, not to let the little shoulders grow round over his scholar's desk. Youth is golden; we should keep it golden, bright, glistening. Youth should frolic, should be sprightly; it should play its cricket, its tennis, its hand-ball. It should run and leap; it should laugh, should sing madrigals and glees, carol with the lark, ring out in chanties, folk-songs, ballads, roundelays——"

He talked on. At any instant Mr. Schofield held himself ready to cough vehemently and shout, "More chicken!" to drown out Penrod in case the fatal words again fell from those eloquent lips; and Mrs. Schofield and Margaret kept themselves prepared at all times to assist him. So passed a threatening meal, which Mrs. Schofield hurried, by every means within decency, to its conclusion. She felt that somehow they would all be safer out in the dark of the front porch, and led the way thither as soon as possible.

"No cigar, I thank you." Mr. Kinosling, establishing himself in a wicker chair beside Margaret, waved away her father's proffer. "I do not smoke. I have never tasted tobacco in any form." Mrs. Schofield was confirmed in her opinion that this would be an ideal son-in-law. Mr. Schofield was not so sure.

"No," said Mr. Kinosling. "No tobacco for me. No cigar, no pipe, no cigarette, no cheroot. For me, a book—a volume of poems, perhaps. Verses, rimes, lines metrical and cadenced—those are my dissipation. Tennyson by preference: 'Maud,' or 'Idylls of the King'—poetry of the sound Victorian days; there is none later. Or Longfellow will rest me in a tired hour. Yes; for me, a book, a volume in the hand, held lightly between the fingers."

Mr. Kinosling looked pleasantly at his fingers as he spoke, waving his hand in a curving gesture which brought it into the light from a window faintly illumined from the interior of the house. Then he passed his hand over his thin hair, and turned toward Penrod, who was perched upon the railing in a dark corner.

"The evening is touched with a slight

coolness," said Mr. Kinosling. "Perhaps I may request the little gentleman——"

"B'gr-r-ruff!" coughed Mr. Schofield. "You'd better change your mind about a cigar."

"No, I thank you. I was about to request the lit——"

"Do try one," Margaret urged. "I'm sure papa's are nice ones. Do try——"

"No, I thank you. I remarked a slight coolness in the air, and my hat is in the hallway. I was about to request——"

"I'll get it for you," said Penrod suddenly.

"If you will be so good," said Mr. Kinosling. "It is a black bowler hat, little gentleman, and placed upon a table in the hall."

"I know where it is."

Penrod entered the door, and a feeling of relief, mutually experienced, carried from one to another of his three relatives their interchanged congratulations that he had recovered his sanity.

"The day is done, and the darkness," began Mr. Kinosling—and recited that poem entire. He followed it with "The Children's Hour," and after a pause at the close, to allow his listeners time for a little reflection upon his rendition, he passed his hand again over his head, and called, in the direction of the doorway,

"I believe I will take my hat now, little gentleman."

"Here it is," said Penrod, unexpectedly climbing over the porch railing, in the other direction. His mother and father and Margaret had supposed him to be standing in the hallway out of deference, and because he thought it tactful not to interrupt the recitations. All of them remembered, later, that this supposed thoughtfulness on his part struck them as unnatural.

"Very good, little gentleman," said Mr. Kinosling, and being somewhat chilled placed the hat firmly upon his head, pulling it down as far as it would go. It had a pleasant warmth, which he noticed at once. The next instant, he noticed something else, a peculiar sensation of the scalp—a sensation which he was quite unable to define. He lifted his hand to take the hat off, and entered upon a strange experience: his hat seemed to have decided to remain where it was. It refused to come off—he could not lift it from his head.

"Do you like Tennyson as much as

Longfellow, Mr. Kinosling?" inquired Margaret.

"I—ah—I cannot say," he returned absently. "I—ah—each has his own—ugh! flavor and savor, each his—ah—ah—"

Struck by a strangeness in his tone, she peered at him curiously through the dusk. His outlines were indistinct, but she made out that his arms were uplifted in a singular posture. He seemed to be wrenching at his head.

"Is — is anything the matter?" she asked anxiously. "Mr. Kinosling, are you ill?"

"Not at—ugh—all," he replied, in the same odd tone. "I—ah—I believe—ugh!" He dropped his hands from his hat, and rose. His manner was slightly agitated.

"I fear I may have taken a trifling—ah—cold. I should—ah—perhaps be—ah—better at home. I will—ah—say good-night."

At the steps, he instinctively lifted his hand to remove his hat, but did not do so, and, saying good-night again in a frigid voice, departed with visible stiffness from that house, to return no more.

"Well, of all—" cried Mrs. Schofield,

astounded. "What was the matter? He just went—like that!" She made a flurried gesture. "In heaven's name, Margaret, what *did* you say to him?"

"*It!*" exclaimed Margaret indignantly. "Nothing! He just *went!*"

"Why, he didn't even take off his hat when he said good-night!" said Mrs. Schofield.

Margaret, who had crossed to the doorway, caught the ghost of a whisper behind her, where stood Penrod.

"You *bet* he didn't!"

He knew not that he was overheard.

A frightful suspicion flashed through Margaret's mind—a suspicion that Mr. Kinosling's hat would have to be either boiled off or shaved off. With growing horror she recalled Penrod's long absence when he went to bring the hat.

"Penrod," said Margaret sharply, "let me see your hands!"

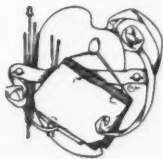
She had toiled at those hands herself late that afternoon, nearly scalding her own, but at last achieving a lily purity.

"Let me see your hands!"

She seized them.

Again they were tarred!

The next *Penrod Schofield* story will appear in the February issue.



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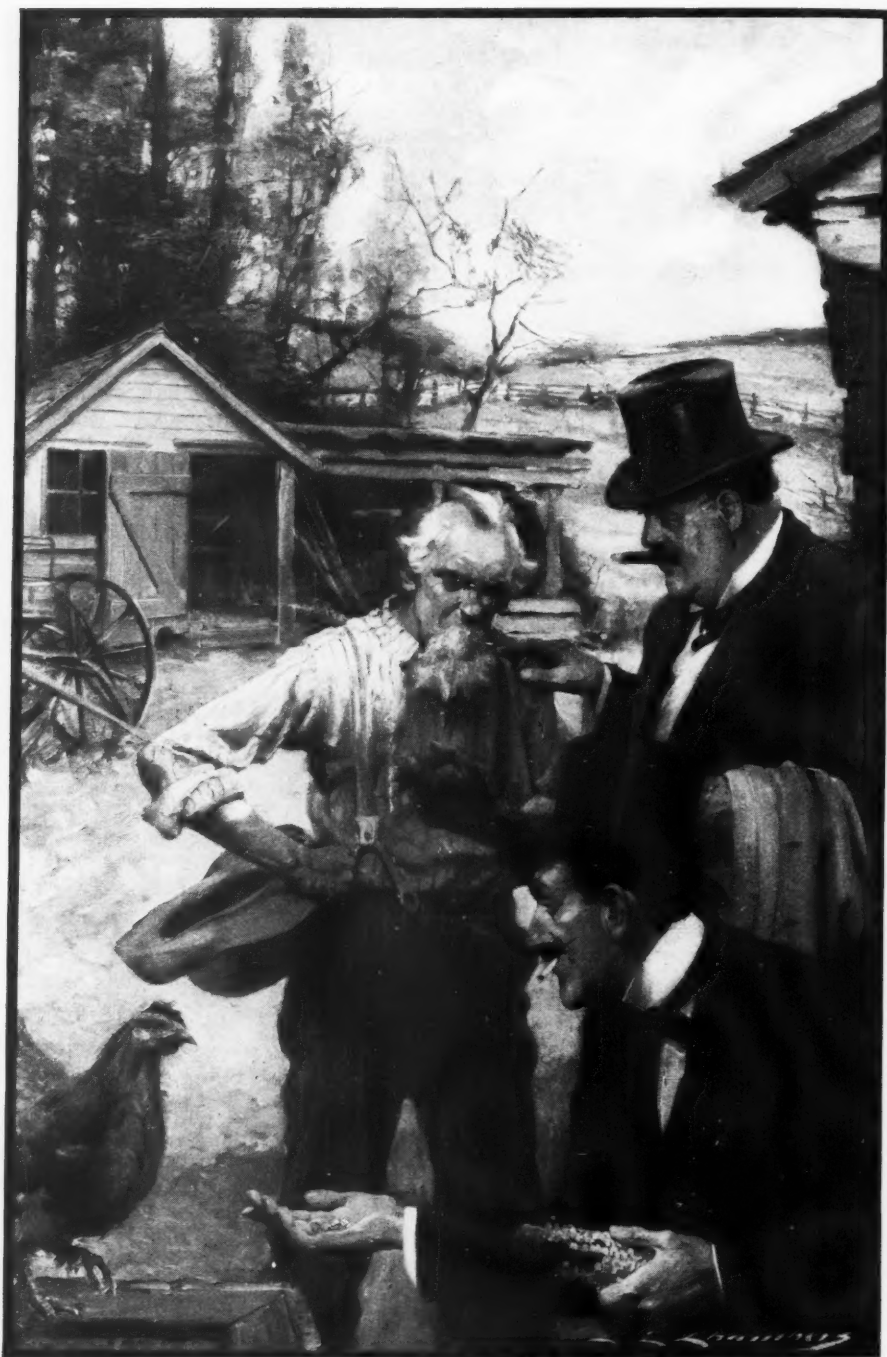
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DRAWN BY CHARLES E. CHAMBERS

Wallingford and Blackie Daw visited from house to house, and talked in whispers to the men folks
(The New Adventures of Wallingford)

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF

Get - Rich - Quick Wallingford

Here is some interesting Wallingford news! In the next issue, the present series of J. Rufus' exploits will be terminated, and the following month we begin the real career of young Jimmy—him of the puzzling ear-lobes—and his side partner, Toad Jessup. Of course Wallingford will continue to play a big part in the new stories, and there will be Blackie Daw and all the rest of the fascinating crowd. But the main point is that there is going to be a new twist put to the most popular fiction series of the age, without yielding a particle of its characteristic interest. In the present story, J. Rufus and Blackie pay a visit to a rural community, and the result is decidedly profitable for all concerned.

By George Randolph Chester

Author of "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford," "The Cash Intrigue," etc.

Illustrated by Charles E. Chambers

BLACKIE DAW threw on all the gas and soared up the hill like a meadow-lark after a fly, while big Jim Wallingford clutched the cushions and held his jaws so tightly shut that it flattened the roundness of his face. Just over the brow, and out of sight from ten yards below, stood a big yellow touring car in the middle of the road; and something in a linen duster was putting the final tap on a tire. Blackie, at top speed, took the ditch, and missed the obstruction by a fraction so scant as to look foolish in figures, and for just one instant, as they hovered over the ditch, eternity yawned—a particularly wide, black mouth.

"Lord!" gasped Wallingford.

Nobody heard him. The driver of Wallingford's racer and the gentleman in the linen duster were exchanging the courtesies of the road—Blackie Daw cursing the man of the yellow car for stopping in the center of things, and the other gentleman cursing Blackie Daw for indiscriminate shooting.

"You pin-head!" protested Wallingford, as they shot on down the hill and onto the clear, straight roadway. His usually pink face was chalklike. "You drive like a fool!"

"Take a drink, Jim," grinned Blackie cheerfully. "Take two drinks and look at things in the right light. You ought to hand me a bouquet for my skill."

Wallingford looked behind him.

"Let me drive," he begged.

"All right," agreed Blackie dismally.

"I'll walk on ahead and wait for you."

At that moment the chug of the big yellow car sounded behind them, and Blackie, who had slowed down to enjoy a grinning argument with J. Rufus, advanced his sparker and shot forward again. Wallingford sank back in his seat and succumbed to the inevitable, though by no means resigned. The big yellow car came tearing down the hill, and for five miles, around sharp bends and along narrow roads and on the edges of steep ditches, the two cars raced, with Blackie confidently in the lead. On the last little hill before they reached the broad, flat farming-district, four mournful gasps of the engine apprised Blackie that the tank was empty!

Wallingford relaxed with an inward hymn of thanksgiving, and gradually the pink crept back into his face. The yellow car shot by, and the driver, who, at this speed, seemed to be a tall, big-boned man with gray hair and mustache, looked back with a gleeful grin and yelled something. Blackie yelled something in return. Neither gentleman understood the other, but it was not necessary. The spirit carried.

"The next car we drive will be a two-cylinder," announced Wallingford emphatically, scrambling out of the machine.

"What you need is a roller-chair," retorted Blackie, standing on the seat to look the landscape o'er. "Look here, you big shiver: you wanted me to lose you until our fixer could get into that last stand and show the leading lollups that the law won't recognize a sucker. Well, I've lost you. Nobody

could have done it better. I don't suppose there's any gasoline within ten miles."

Without waiting for Wallingford's grumbled reply, Blackie jumped down and headed for the top of the hill. Wallingford, though groaning in the flesh, followed. His heavy body longed for the cushions, but his nerves demanded exercise.

Just around the corner from the top of the hill was a slanting farm devoted to mullen stalks and skinny sheep, and on the upper edge of the farm was a somewhat kinked frame house which stood just behind a tin automobile. The hood of the machine was open, and a whiskered farmer, in a blue hickory shirt, creased tightly to him with painfully obvious suspenders, was standing amid considerable detached engine.

The change in Wallingford was instantaneous. He beamed friendliness. It was as if he had been freshly oiled and burnished.

"Good-morning, brother," he hailed, in his heartily unctuous voice. "Can you part with a little gasoline?"

Amos Peabody, with his fingers still clutched in his gray locks, looked up with a scowl.

"I'll sell you all I got," and with a much wrinkled boot he kicked the front tire of his centennial auto. The tire, patched and rag-bound and askew, squeaked in pathetic reproach, and the whole machine rattled like a rotary churn full of milk-strainers.

"Engine trouble?" guessed Wallingford, calling on his faculty of helpful sympathy.

"Danged if I know!" responded Mr. Peabody, in disgust. "I've tinkered this danged machine till it won't tinker any more. I ain't had a minute's peace since I traded off my hoss."

Wallingford suppressed a grin.

"That must have been a long time ago," he guessed, while Blackie Daw leaned against the high red seat in smiling ease.

"Last spring," reported Mr. Peabody. "I got it from Hen Berry, and he got it from the widow Marks, and she got it from Jing Hackett, and he got it from the Lincum boys, and they got it from Major Harrison. It was the first automobile in these parts," and, in spite of his disgust with the contrivance, he viewed it with a certain amount of historic pride.

Wallingford looked over the broad and smiling farm-land which stretched out from the bottom of the hill. It seemed a particularly rich section, a large part of its wealth

apparently consisting of live stock, and dotted liberally in the landscape were well-painted houses amid beautiful shade-trees, and pretentious barns amid neat haystacks. There was money here! With a sudden resolution, Wallingford threw off his coat.

"I think your old friend will stand one more tinker," he observed pleasantly.

II

"YES, that big yellow car's Major Harrison's, too," said Amos Peabody, settling for the successful tinkering with a cold-chicken snack on the rickety old porch. "He's got about everything. Makes his own electric lights with a gas engine. Been to Europe."

Wallingford, gazing contemplatively down at Major Harrison's big yellow house, in the exact center of the scenery, laid down the well-polished bone of his chicken leg. He had been extracting solid information about Major Harrison for the past twenty minutes, and now he had made up his mind.

"You Dickson County farmers have been mighty kind to the major," he observed.

"Yes, I reckon so," admitted Mr. Peabody, though doubtfully.

Wallingford fixed on him an eye which was little less than reproachful.

"You sell him all your cattle and hogs and sheep," he charged.

"Well," considered Mr. Peabody, "we get more money that way."

"He sells you all your supplies. If you want gasoline you take your tanks to him."

"Well, we get it cheaper that way."

"You've let him control you."

"Well," again with speculative hesitation, "we're all better off since the major settled down on his first twenty acres, years ago, and took up scientific farmin'."

Wallingford leaned forward to look Amos Peabody impressively in the eye.

"Are you all rich?" he demanded.

"Well, no."

"Who is rich?"

"Major Harrison"—a little reluctant, touched pride at the back of it.

"Do you all make your own electric light?"

"Well, no."

"Who does?"

"Major Harrison."

"Do you all have sixty-horse-power French racing automobiles, long-distance telephones, Paris gowns for your women,

trips to Europe? No! Who does? I'll tell you: Major Harrison! Now let me ask you another question. Who labored in the sweat of their brows to pay for all those extravagant luxuries? Who did? Not Major Harrison. Who was it?"

Amos Peabody found the answer himself, and it was a great discovery.

"Us regular farmers, by dang!"

"I thought so," commented Wallingford, as if he had half expected this answer. He sank his voice. "The curse of this country, Mr. Peabody, is the accumulation of unearned wealth!"

"B'dang, you're right!" and Amos Peabody's gnarled old fist came down on the edge of the table. "Hen Berry said that identical same thing at the Saturday Night Forum last session."

Wallingford's eyes brightened.

"You have a debating society," he guessed. "You discuss all the leading questions of the day."

Blackie Daw, loafing around the corner of

the house with two brown shepherd-dogs, now came up on the porch and stood with his left hand in the bosom of his coat.

"I was the leading orator of the Tinkle-creek Weekly Lyceum," he stated, in his most sonorous voice. "My speech on 'The Brotherhood of Man' is remembered to this day in Tinklecreek."

He was astonished to find Wallingford favoring him with a glance of approval.

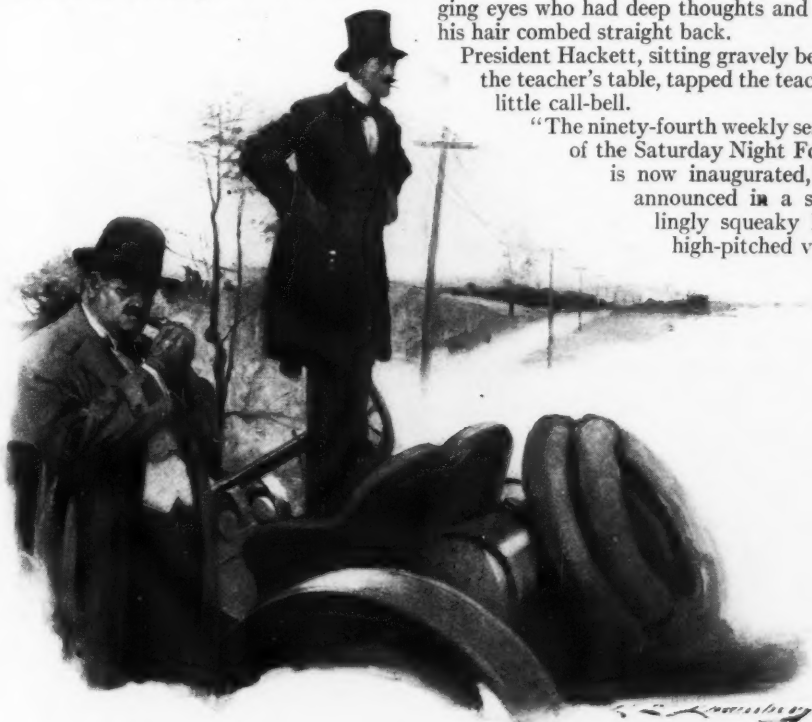
"That, in fact, Mr. Peabody, is our mission," said J. Rufus. "We are organizers—organizers of the Brotherhood of Man. Tonight we shall attend the Forum."

III

THE best of the brain and brawn of Dickson County was gathered in the Dickson Fork-Roads schoolhouse when those eminent reformers and uplifters, J. Rufus Wallingford and Horace J. Daw, were invited to seats on the rostrum by President Jing Hackett, a smooth-faced farmer with bulging eyes who had deep thoughts and wore his hair combed straight back.

President Hackett, sitting gravely behind the teacher's table, tapped the teacher's little call-bell.

"The ninety-fourth weekly session of the Saturday Night Forum is now inaugurated," he announced in a startlingly squeaky little high-pitched voice.



"What you need is a roller-chair," retorted Blackie, standing on the seat to look the landscape o'er. "I don't suppose there's any gasoline within ten miles"

The New Adventures of Wallingford

and he cast his bulging eyes paternally over the rows upon rows of brave men and fair women. Tillie Berry nudged Sam Lincum and giggled. Jing Hackett's third vest button was open, and the end of his blue tie peeped out. "The secretary will please call the roll."

Secretary Bud Talbot blushed to the roots of his hair. He was a big-boned boy, and popular, but a seat on a rostrum made him conscious of the size of his feet. He called the roll in a voice so heavy that the air quivered. Tillie Berry giggled when she answered. There was nothing to giggle about, but she was just that kind—a fiery, red-cheeked girl with big eyes and a snub nose.

"Friends and fellow members," observed Jing Hackett, popping up spryly as soon as the last name was reached. "It is seldom this gathering is favored with an opportunity so opportune as that of this evening." These might be slick talkers from New York, but they had nothing on Jing Hackett. Old Dan Simms, who had read Shakespeare straight through, besides the entire works of Darwin, nodded his head in approval.

"The Saturday Night Forum has discussed the leading questions of the day, and has taken up, with vast intelligence, I am compelled to assert, all the graver problems of sociology and communal economics," went on the president, with due pauses. "Its deliberations have been such as to merit, in many cases, perpetuation in enduring form; but even so, it has not given to these weighty matters a thoroughly exhaustive treatment, because, in these endless and ever-shifting interdependent sociological conditions, no exhaustion is possible. Therefore, my friends and fellow members, it gives me great pleasure to state that we have with us this evening two distinguished

gentlemen—" He paused. He bowed to J. Rufus Wallingford. Broad-chested Jim Wallingford, his round, pink face beaming with human kindness and brotherly friendliness, bowed in return. Tillie Berry giggled. The president pivoted, and bowed to the thin, black-haired, and black-mustached Horace G. Daw. Mr. Daw was apparently lost in abstract thought, gazing contemplatively into the whiskers of old Dan Simms. He remained abstracted long enough to em-

barrass Jing Hackett to the point of hair brushing; then he became suddenly aware of the situation, rose, and bowed profoundly. Tillie Berry giggled. President Jing Hackett blinked his bulging eyes, and tried, in a panic, to remember the construction of his unfinished sentence.

"The first number on the program will be a recitation by little Susie Pinker, entitled 'The Ride of Paul Revere.'"

Little Susie Pinker, a skinny-faced youngster of nine, with her hair braided so tightly that it pulled up her eyebrows, switched up to the platform and jerked her head, and told, with much dramatic instinct, the tale of that famous gallop; while the heavier of guests of honor studied the audience in detail, beginning with Tom Beezon, in the farthest corner, in earnest conference with the three other members on the affirmative side of the important question: "Resolved that fame is to be more desired than riches."

A very prosperous community. They all wore good ready-made clothes and heavy

watch-chains. Some of the men had their trousers creased. Eleven automobiles were parked outside. The ladies wore hats which were right up to the minute in style.

Horton Giggory read an address on "Ensilage: Its Use and Its Dangers." The



He called the roll in a voice so heavy that the air quivered

debate happened next. Eight vigorous orators, all training for the legislature, and one with his deadly earnest eye fixed on the presidency of the United States, fought out the world-old battle of "Fame *versus* Riches," and Fame won, as she always does in the country, where Riches are properly despised. Then came the *Forum Weekly*. Mamie Hackett read it, as well as she could through her laughter. She was a tall, thin girl, but her hair was beautifully frizzed and she had a cunning little lisp.

That was a great number of the *Forum Weekly*. Listen: "A certain black-haired young lady, living not too far from the church"—and Mamie glanced meaningly at Jennie Sanders, who blushed furiously as all eyes turned toward her—"was seen walking out Crockett Lane last Sunday evening after church. She had on a white dress, but was it a black belt around her waist?" Could you beat that for an entertaining item? The *Forum* laughed for twenty minutes. J. Rufus Wallingford was highly interested in the *Forum Weekly*. He followed its every item, and studied the people to whom it referred, and the more he studied the more convinced he was that there was an opportunity in this community for uplift work. He told them so, later on, when President Jing Hackett led him to the edge of the platform.

Wallingford was a distinct revelation in the line of oratory. He had spent a lifetime in playing on people, as though they were the keys of a piano, and now he inculcated the downtrodden farmers of Dickson County with some yeastlike new ideas which were bound to ferment. Chief among these ideas was self-pity. They were not receiving the full value of their own hard toil. Somebody else was becoming rich from their labor.

Another idea the distinguished philanthropist offered them. Shame! They were not receiving the full value of their own hard toil. Somebody else was becoming rich from their labor. Dan Simms twisted his fingers in his whiskers. He knew whom Wallingford meant. Major Harrison!

Ambition! Wallingford dwelt heavily on that. They were not receiving the full value of their own hard toil. Some one else was becoming rich from their labor. The affirmative of the great struggle "Fame *versus* Riches," seated, flushed with victory, on the bench where they had caucused their smashing arguments, agreed unanimously

that the somebody else in question was Major Harrison.

The distinguished uplifter stood before the multitude, broad of white vest, smiling with humanitarian love, earnestness on his round, pink face. His heart bled for the victims of sociological conditions which permitted one man to wax fat at the expense of others; which permitted one man practically to enslave his neighbors; which permitted one man to appropriate to himself all the good things of life, and to enjoy extravagant luxury wrung from the blood of his fellow man! Was this a proper condition? Was this brotherhood? Was this justice? No!

The eminent reformer became quite indignant about it. By the Eternal, these things should not be! He, J. Rufus Wallingford—and he slapped himself on the chest—would not permit it. Wherever he went, oppression and tyranny must cease! How could it be prevented? Brotherhood. That was the answer! They should unite. He would show them how. He would remain among them, he and his companion uplifter, and aid them to organize; and for all this he asked not one penny of return! Not even thanks! All he wanted, and he placed his hand over his heart, was the consciousness that he had performed well his duty as he saw it, so that he might earn his own approbation by performing some worthy deed for those he loved above all else—his fellow men!

One would scarcely expect Blackie Daw, or any one else, to make much of a speech after that, but Blackie did it. J. Rufus Wallingford's address had been one of sound logic—the appeal to reason, as it were, but Mr. Daw was more of an exhorter. He implored; he ranted; he raged; he roused them from being slaves! He urged them to come on and follow the battle-flag of freedom! He lifted them from the ranks of the downtrodden and oppressed, and made them glorious leaders of something or other or anything! His favorite attitude in rousing the slaves was to stand on one foot with both arms spread, and end with a mighty stamp; but, with all that, at the conclusion they followed him, as one person, into the ringing strains of "Auld Lang Syne," which was his favorite selection for anything but a reunion.

Say, do you know that's a pair of wonderful men—brainy; full of ideas; self-sacrific-

ing, too; willing to stay right here and help, and not ask for a cent! No slick game about this, because Mr. Wallingford and Mr. Daw hadn't anything to gain. Just reformers, that's all. But say; do you know what this brotherhood talk's all about? I don't. How does he reckon we can get more money for our sheep?

IV

THE Saturday Night Forum had the nearest to a public explanation of the brotherhood of man which was ever given by its eminent apostles. Just enough had been told to whet the appetite; the balance had been saved for private proselyting. Wallingford and Blackie Daw visited from house to house, and praised the fried chicken, and talked in whispers to the men folks, out by the well or over behind the corn-crib or down in the milk-house. The week of campaigning ended in the Forum Brotherhood, a society so secret that its members were forbidden even to use the grip or the password in public.

Two days after the Forum Brotherhood had been completed, and its principles fully formulated, and its dozen or so of resolutions unanimously adopted, a stranger called on Major Harrison. The stranger was a brisk, chunky young man with pompadour hair and thick eye-glasses. He introduced himself as Paul Pollet, and he was as brisk as business itself.

"I understand you control the live stock of Dickson County," stated Mr. Pollet, as soon as he had laid his hat on the major's library-table.

"Possibly," replied the major, who wore his gray mustache cropped short, and his speech the same way.

"I want to buy two thousand head of beef cattle, five thousand head of hogs, the same number of sheep, and five hundred dozen of poultry. Spot cash. Delivery completed two weeks from to-day."

"Great guns!" exploded the major; "you want about all the live stock in Dickson County."

"Dickson County live stock's the only kind I do want," Mr. Pollet immediately assured him. "That must be in the order. I'll give you a shade above the regular market-price, a five-thousand-dollar advance payment this minute, and here's my bank-statement. I'll have this account certified

and held in escrow until the completion of our transaction."

Major Harrison had a habit of compressing his lips over matters requiring decision, and now he pinched them together until his mustache struck his chin. There was no fault to find with Mr. Pollet's papers. That part of the proposition seemed without a flaw.

"Two weeks is a mighty short time for delivery," he objected. "I couldn't be responsible for railroad delays, strikes, or accidents."

"I'll accept delivery two days earlier, at your nearest shipping-point," offered Mr. Pollet. Quick, decisive, right to the point, fair-minded! He did have a habit of letting his eyes stray out of the window and to the backs of the books in the library-cases and to the inscriptions on the letter-file; but that was a small matter.

"I suppose you don't mind if I verify this bank-statement," requested Major Harrison, reaching for his telephone.

"Go as far as you like," granted Mr. Pollet, almost eagerly.

The Chicago bank which held Mr. Pollet's deposit stated that the deposit was there. It would recognize an order from Mr. Pollet placing the amount in escrow, subject to contract.

"All right," declared Major Harrison, gazing for the first time on Mr. Pollet with full and free confidence. "Now I must have about two days to make sure of securing this amount of live stock for immediate delivery."

"I can't allow you two minutes," returned Mr. Pollet snappily. "I've gambled on your absolute knowledge of the Dickson County market. I have heavy contracts of my own to make. You'll have to gamble a little yourself."

Again the major pondered. He pushed his mustache against his chin, and made a mental inventory of the live stock within his probable command. He almost knew the Dickson County cattle by name, for every cow grazing in a field represented a certain profit growing up for him.

"Very well," he concluded, rising. "We'll drive right up to the county seat and see my lawyer."

V

THE big yellow automobile stopped out by Hen Berry's corn field.

"Hen, I guess you have about a hundred head of cattle ready to ship," said Major

Harrison, preparing to throw out his clutch and slip the lever into the first gear. "Suppose you drive them up to Dicksonville to-morrow."

Hen Berry put his foot on the second rail and shoved his well-seasoned straw hat on the back of his head.

"Can't do it, Major," he announced firmly. "I got all my cattle pledged."

The major took his foot from the clutch.

"Pledged! What do you mean by that?"

"Just what I said," replied Hen, peeling rotted slivers from the top rail and breaking them with his thumb and forefinger. "There ain't any explanations."

The major made a move as if to climb down from his imported car, but thought better of it. He glared sternly at Hen Berry, and shot off up the road to Dan Simms' place. He found Dan back in the wide old barn, mending harness.

"How many head of cattle have you, Dan?" asked the major, then started to turn and back, to head out for the road.

"Not any that I can call my own," responded Dan Simms, almost defiantly, and he twisted his fingers in his beard just below his chin. "You see, they're all pledged."

This time the major did alight from his machine.

"What's this pledge business?" he wanted to know. "Hen Berry said the same thing. To whom are the cattle pledged? How many of you are in it?"

"The whole caboodle of us, I reckon. I'm under my oath, so I can't tell you anything about it. But there's this much: the farmers of Dickson County are bound to have the fruits of their own labor, and the day of unearned wealth is past in this



The major's cheek-bones grew red. "I'll get to the bottom of this infernal nonsense!" he declared

section. The community has become an economic sociology."

The major's cheek-bones grew red.

"I'll get to the bottom of this infernal nonsense!" he declared. "Who's doing it? Those two smooth-looking strangers? I'll rail-ride them out of the county."

"I don't see where you'll get your help," speculated old Dan, clinching a rivet and enjoying himself hugely. It was a keen pleasure to help hold the whip; even if there were a hundred hands gripped around the butt. "Those strangers ain't got anything but friends. They're genuine philanthropists. They don't want a cent."

"They'll skin you alive and serve you right!" predicted the major. "Look here, Dan Simms, what did you have when I first began to handle your business?"

"What did you have?" immediately retorted old Dan, rising and filling his pipe. "I had a mortgage, but I worked like Sam Hill and got rid of it. You built a thirty-

thousand-dollar house, and I'll bet I paid for the shingles and the Colonial stairway and the mahogany player-piano. Things has changed in Dickson County, Major Harrison."

Spluttering with rage, the major jumped in his car and went back home, and telegraphed to Paul Pollet, in care of his bank, that it was impossible for him to fulfil that contract. Three hours later he received a characteristic reply:

Ship that stock.

POLLET.

VI

HEN BERRY sat down by Sam Lincum in the meeting of the Forum Brotherhood during the opening exercises, and placed his straightened right palm at right angle to his right ear. Sam Lincum did the same, and thus finished the grand hailing sign.

"Freedom, brother," said Hen Berry.

"Justice, brother," responded Sam Lincum solemnly, and the password having thus been duly given, they felt free to talk.

"Seems to me we're playin' a low-down trick on the major, after all," observed Hen, with a troubled brow.

"I don't know how; the major got rich on us," grunted Sam, who produced less results from his land than any farmer in the county.

"Mebby," admitted Hen. "It's a question in my mind if we'd have been any richer without the major. But that ain't the point. The major's got a big order, and if we don't let him have this stock he's in a hole. I figure it this way: the major hadn't any warning that we was goana stand out for our rights, and he depended on us."

"Yes, but we stood out for our rights," responded Sam, with a laugh.

"All right; have it your own way," gave in Hen, but he turned on Sam a cold eye. "Just the same, Sam Lincum, the major got out of bed to bail you out of jail, that night you got on a bender at the county seat."

"Un-huh," admitted Sam reluctantly.

"My idea is to let the major have our stock this one time, and then give him fair warning."

Sam Lincum's better self fought a tremendous fight, and came out on top, though feeble.

"I suppose it's a weakness," Sam grudgingly admitted; "but I reckon we'd ought to let him have it. I'm too kind-hearted."

Dan Simms exchanged the hailing sign and the password with Amos Peabody.

"I guess the major's cured of the notion that he owns Dickson County," he suggested.

"You're dang right!" agreed Amos, with satisfaction.

"It's about time we was teachin' him a lesson," and Dan twisted his fingers in his beard. "Just the same, I don't believe in leavin' a man in a hole, especially when he offers me the highest price I ever got for my cattle."

The secretary finished his report. The secretary was Jing Hackett, and he sat at the right hand of the Elder Brother, who was broad of chest and pink of face, and wore the purple robe of authority with all the effectiveness of a Fourth-of-July balloon. The Elder Brother rose, and placed his right palm at his right ear.

"New business," he announced.

Hen Berry popped up, palm to ear.

"Revered Elder Brother!" he shrielled.

"Brother Berry," Wallingford's voice was the height of sober formality.

"I been talking with some of the brothers," went on Brother Berry, "and we've just about agreed not to be too hard on Major Harrison. I've got a resolution here I want to propose. I move——"

The voice of Elder Brother Wallingford broke in on that motion. It was a grave voice, a deeply concerned voice, a voice full of emotion.

"Stop!" it commanded. "I know what you are about to say. You are about to move that we decide to sell Major Harrison the stock with which to fill this one order. You do this because your heart is kind, but," and he paused impressively, "if you weaken now you are lost!"

"That's what I say," interrupted Sam Lincum, then, remembering, touched his palm to his ear.

"If you would have your rights, you must be stern," went on Wallingford, in the kindly tone of one instructing children. "Why do the icemen strike in hot weather? Why do the waiters strike just before Easter? Why do the clerks strike just at Christmas? Why do the field-hands strike in harvest-time? Why must we be firm when Major Harrison has a large order?"

The tall, thin Inner Sentry with the black mustache rose to his feet, with the long red stole of office around his neck, and thrust his palm to his ear.

"Freedom, revered Elder Brother!" he shouted, flinging his arms aloft and standing on one leg. "Freedom: that's the answer!" and he gave the floor a mighty stamp.

"Brother Daw is right," pronounced the Elder Brother coldly. "Let us hear no more of this foolish motion," and he piped a severe eye on Hen Berry, who squirmed but rose no more. Wallingford had been watching for that motion. He had been feeling it in the air, and for this whole day he had been fearing that he might be compelled to telegraph to Paul Pollet to find a market for that stock.

There was a knock at the door. The Outer Sentry, who was Horton Giggory, disguised in a white stole, came in to Blackie Daw and placed his hand to his ear.

"A belated brother comes," he recited.

"I shall report the arrival to the Elder Brother and ascertain if he may enter," recited the black-mustached Inner Sentry.

He wheeled to the right. He marched six paces to the aisle. He wheeled to the left. He marched down the full length of the schoolroom. He wheeled to the right. He marched in front of the rostrum. He placed his palm to his ear.

"Revered Elder Brother, a belated brother comes."

"Who is the belated brother?" asked Wallingford, placing his palm to his ear.

"I shall go forth and ascertain," and Blackie Daw, turning about face, marched back the way he had come. He sent the Outer Sentry to ascertain who the belated brother might be. The Outer Sentry performed his errand and came back, to report Brother Jud Cox. The Inner Sentry marched up to the rostrum and gave that name.

"If Brother Cox is enrolled, and is in good standing, and has the hailing sign, the grip, the password, and all the secret work, he may enter," declared the Elder Brother, without a grin. "Examine the applicant for admis-

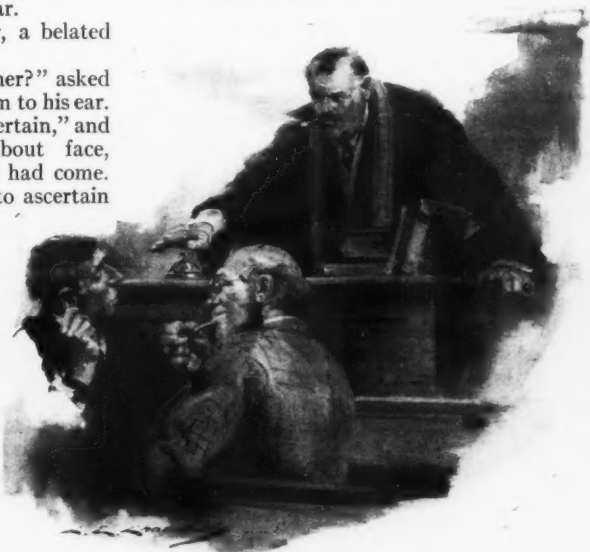
sion, and if he be found worthy, admit him to our presence."

There was a look of gratification on every face as they waited for Brother Cox. This dreary waiting, while a known member was being put through the secret work in the cloak-room, was perfectly commendable. By George, it was no easy matter to walk into a Forum Brotherhood meeting! Its awesome mysteries were mighty well guarded! Whatever went on here was just as secret as the grave.

Brother Cox, who was a young man with a sole-leather face, brought important news, which he disclosed as soon as he had the recognition of the Elder Brother.

"Major Harrison was over to see me," he told the brotherhood. "He says he gives up. Here's his order, and all we have to do is to fill it. We keep all the profit."

The Elder Brother and the Inner Sentry exchanged a sickly glance across the length of the schoolroom, while all the other brothers applauded, and happiness reigned supreme. At the price Paul Pollet had made the major, Wallingford and Blackie stood to lose about fifteen thousand dollars on live stock, besides all their expenses, their time, their trouble, and their pleasant anticipations; and this last item was one to be considered.



Suddenly the Elder Brother began pounding the bell furiously. "Order!" he roared

The meeting was practically a pandemonium, by now. There was only one idea in the room, and that was to take about five minutes for mutual congratulations, then hurry home and begin rounding up the stock; for there were only two more days in which the deliveries might be made. The Elder Brother and the Inner Sentry exchanged another sickly glance, and in neither eye was there any gleam of encouragement. The brothers deserted their decorous seats and were gathered in eager little knots, discussing the price.

Suddenly the Elder Brother began pounding the bell furiously.

"Order!" he roared.

"By dang, he's right!" agreed Amos Peabody. "We'd ought to settle down to business and legally accept this order before we start to fill it."

"Cricky, yes!" and Hen Berry was in the middle of the floor, appealing for recognition, before the rest of the brothers were seated. If there was any one thing Hen Berry liked to do it was to introduce motions. The Elder Brother, however, refused to recognize him.

"Order!" again roared Wallingford, and Blackie Daw, gazing into the face of Jim Wallingford as he would read the headlines of a paper, sank back in relief. "Your Elder Brother, by his patriarchal office, claims the privilege of speech before he entertains any further new business. Oh my poor misguided brethren! I ask you why I came among you? It was to uplift you, to raise you from your thralldom, to render you independent, to give you the fruits of your own toil! Would you have had the offer of this order if it had not been for me? No! Then I have already served you well. What have I asked of you in return? Nothing! What do I receive in return? Nothing! Nothing but sadness and disappointment; for you grasp at the first bait the rich man throws you. Why does Major Harrison offer you this order? Is it because he wants to make money for you?"

"Not by a dang sight!" interrupted Amos Peabody.

"That's what I say!" This from Sam Lincum, and Elder Brother Wallingford took his first comfortable breath.

"He offers you this order, at the last moment, to get himself out of a hole," went on Wallingford. "If he don't ship that

stock, he'll be sued for breach of agreement; so he's letting you save his bacon. It's a shrewd trick, the same kind by which he grew rich at your expense. It's his first move toward breaking up your brotherhood and making you work for him the rest of your lives!"

Dan Simms bobbed up, without his hand to his ear.

"I'm goana sell my cattle," he announced. "It's the best price I ever got, or expect to get."

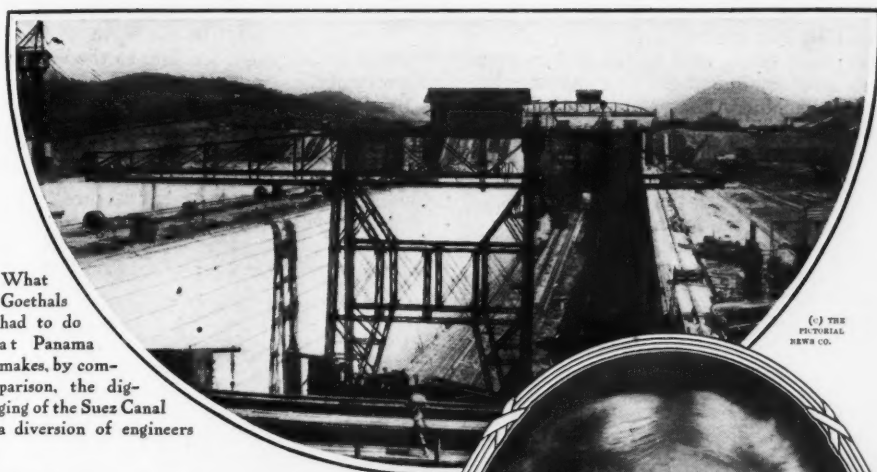
Blackie Daw glared at him with ideas of strangulation in his mind; but Elder Brother Wallingford held his grip on the steering-wheel. He took a deep inhalation and cleared his throat, for he intended to make the speech of his life.

He did it. He told them more about philanthropy than they had ever dreamed. He let them behold his innermost heart. It was simply straining its seams with pure, unselfish humanitarianism. He had stopped at this place to lift the heel of oppression from the necks of the Dickson County farmers, and he intended to do it, if it cost him all he had in the world. Was it money which had tempted them to surrender? He would save them even from that! What was the difference between the present market-price, which the brotherhood could secure at any moment, and the price the major's order named? Eight thousand dollars, approximately. Very well, here was the most overwhelming proof of his sincere motives that any man ever offered. Here was ten thousand dollars, spot cash! He counted out the money, in bills of large denomination, and fluttered those bills before them. He tossed the bills in front of the treasurer, who sat on the rostrum at his left. He gave the money to them freely, because he did not wish to give the lie to his philanthropy by causing them to lose a legitimate profit. It was only fair that he should bear that burden. Now let them turn back the major's order, and be men!

Blackie could not repress a whoop of admiration, for that resistless argument saved the brotherhood; it turned back the major's order on himself, and, a week later, when the eminent philanthropists were home in Tarryville, Major Harrison settled with Paul Pollet's lawyers. They secured a return of Paul's deposit, and damages to the amount of fifty thousand dollars!

The next adventure of *Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford* will appear in the February issue.

What Goethals had to do at Panama makes, by comparison, the digging of the Suez Canal a diversion of engineers



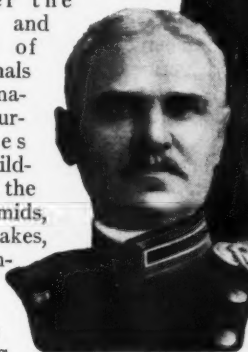
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EDITORIAL
NEWS CO.

The Colossus of Panama

By
John Temple Graves

GEORGE WASHINGTON GOETHALS is now, by virtue of achievement, the ranking engineer of all the world, and is hailed by thousands as the ranking engineer of all the ages.

For that which has been accomplished under the brain and hand of Goethals at Panama, surpasses the building of the Pyramids, and makes, by comparison, the digging



(C) HARRIS & SWING



(C) PACIFIC BRON.

The ranking engineer of all the world and of all the ages

of the Canal at Suez a diversion of engineers.

It was, in fact, only a part of Goethals' mighty work to dig a vast artificial canyon nine miles long and of twice a battle-ship's breadth, and to build a dozen huge locks, each containing more solid concrete than the great Pyramid of Cheops. In these

The Colossus of Panama

locks he has erected forty-seven pairs of great steel gates, each as tall and as broad as a six-story building. To move the elaborate machinery that will open and close these gates and tow the world's ships through the locks, he has had to turn the Chagres River into the rushing concrete-lined spillway of the great Gatun Dam, where it will drive, with all the force of its once dreaded floods, the turbines of the electric-power plant. He has increased the width of the locks from ninety-five to one hundred and ten feet, and their length from nine hundred and fifty to one thousand feet. He has added half as much again to the two-hundred-foot channel through the cut, and has enlarged by fourteen-million-dollars' worth the additional fortifications ordered by the government—and he has done this without delaying the opening of the canal.

In sweeping summary, Goethals has broken the back-bone of the continents with a river navigable to the mightiest ships, has held in leash the mountain floods that fill it, has rewritten history, given a new birth to universal commerce, and literally revolutionized the geography of the world.

THE MAN AND HIS WORK

But this mighty enterprise is not greater than the man who built it. The creature can never be greater than the creator. The man is mightier than his work. And in the new gallery of the immortals, George Washington Goethals, like the hero of the odes of Horace, has builded "a monument more enduring than brass and taller than the regal structure of the Pyramids!"

It is an interesting coincidence of heredity that this mighty deed at Panama should have been done by a Holland-American coming through two generations from the land of dikes and canals.

Goethals was born of Dutch ancestry in the city of Brooklyn, in 1858—although Governor O'Neal stoutly maintained, at the recent Southern Commercial Congress at Mobile, that he was born in Alabama. He studied in the College of the City of New York. He graduated from West Point second in the class of 1880. His first work in lock construction was on the Ohio River, at Marietta. He was in charge of the Mussel Shoals' construction on the Tennessee River, near Chattanooga. He helped to build part of the Eastern seacoast defenses, and was quietly situated in Wash-

ington when Destiny, in the form of the Panama Canal, beckoned him to the Great Opportunity.

Brief as is this biography, it is made complete by a single fact: Wherever Goethals worked, he did his whole duty intelligently, tirelessly, with fearless courage, with unyielding will and granite persistence, unswerving devotion to his whole duty, and with a modest but complete sense of consecration to his public and private responsibility.

A BENEVOLENT DESPOT

Goethals has been called a benevolent despot. Both the adjective and the appellation fit him like a glove. There is nowhere in civilization such absolute despotism as has existed at Panama under Goethals' rule, or rather reign. It is equally true that nowhere in civilization is there a better, wiser, and juster government, or a ruler more universally beloved and trusted than at Panama.

He has been absolute lord of a host of forty thousand toilers who speak half a hundred tongues. He has been czar of as picturesque a people as ever fought or labored at the will of a chief. Fighting against geography, climate, and every natural obstacle, they follow the despotic leader with absolute faith and absolute devotion. He toils for six days in the week, every hour of the day, with these men, appearing everywhere, without notice, superintending everything.

And on Sunday he holds in his office the most unique and successful supreme court in the world. He himself is the only judge. His decisions are beyond appeal, and are never protested or dissented from. Every grievance, every complaint, every wrong, and every sorrow on the Isthmus come before this central judge, and when "the old man" has spoken, the appellant goes out knowing that he has had justice if he has not won his point.

To the people of the Isthmus, "Chief Justice" Goethals ranks with Solomon and Daniel and Harun-al-Rashid.

The "benevolent despot of the Canal Zone" is the only reasonable argument ever presented against a democratic and representative government. It cannot be denied that under no other form of government would the mighty work of the canal have prospered and progressed so wonderfully well. The Panama Canal is completed

one year ahead of time. It is Colonel Goethals' ambition to hand back to the government several millions of dollars of the money estimated for its building.

With the canal completed, the United States enters
nec-



Colonel Goethals' Canal Zone residence



Colonel and Mrs. Goethals at home on the Isthmus

world-power, and as a mightier factor in the realms of universal commerce. Its making means an upheaval among the nations, and a revival of our navy and of our merchant marine. Of course, such an event will establish new rivalries and new apprehensions among the commercial nations. There will be both protests and threats in diplomacy and trade.

But the nation that produced Goethals will not, and must not, be found lacking in the spirit in necessary advancement work

essarily into a vaster influence and force as a

that will defend, both diplomacy and, if essary in arms, the portunities and tages which have established by the at Panama.

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A benevolent despot, who has been absolute lord of a host of forty thousand toilers

The Hidden Children

THE STORY OF THE LIFE AND LOVE OF A NAMELESS WOMAN

By Robert W. Chambers

Author of "The Common Law," "The Streets of Ascalon," "The Business of Life," etc.

Illustrated by Howard Chandler Christy

SYNOPSIS—The narrator is Euan Loskiel, a young ensign in Morgan's Rifles serving in central New York under General James Clinton. Loskiel, who knows nothing of his parentage, has been brought up by the wealthy tory, Guy Johnson, now a refugee in Canada. Early in 1779, General Washington determined to destroy the hostile Iroquois Confederacy, and Clinton is to assist General Sullivan in dealing the blow. Lieutenant Boyd, with Loskiel and a rifleman escort, is sent to Westchester County to obtain the service of one Mayaro, a Siwanois sagamore, but Mohican by adoption, to act as chief guide to the expedition. They are successful in this mission through the assistance of a beautiful young woman who knows the Indian. Her presence in the neutral territory is a mystery, and she passes as a common camp-follower; but to Loskiel it is very evident that she is nothing of the sort. She tells the ensign her name is Lois. Before parting, in token of her great service and his admiration, he places a gold ring on her finger—and she allows it to remain. After taking part in a stirring encounter with the British cavalry, the detail, accompanied by the Indian, sets out for the headquarters of Morgan's regiment at the Lower Fort, near Otsego Lake. On the journey, Loskiel's suspicions are aroused against the sagamore. He seems to have kept in secret touch with some one the whole way. On the fourth night, he discovers Mayaro in conversation with Lois. The girl has been following them. When the Indian leaves her, Loskiel approaches. Much startled, she informs the ensign that Mayaro has brought her food each night—that she was afraid to trust herself to the others of the party. Loskiel is chagrined at her lack of confidence, and, as she will not come into camp and there is danger from scalping parties, he purposes guarding her the rest of the night. But, while wondering who this enigmatical girl may be—she bears every trait of gentle birth and breeding, yet declares she earns her living by washing for the soldiers—he falls asleep. Awakening before dawn, he finds the girl is gone, leaving behind a wild rosebud with a message: "A rose for your ring, comrade. And be not angry with me," scratched on a piece of silver-birchbark.

NO, no sooner had we broken camp, covered our fire, packed, saddled, and mounted, than all around us, as we advanced, the wilderness began to wear an aspect very different to that brooding solitude which hitherto had been familiar to us—our shelter and our menace also.

We were within a wolfhound's easy run to Cherry Valley, Fort Hunter, and the Mohawk—the outer edges of my own country. Northeast of us lay Schenectady behind its fort; north of us lay my former home, Guy Park, and near it old Fort Johnson and Johnson Hall. Farther still to the northward stretched the Vlaie and silvery Sacandaga.

As we journeyed on, the first wayfarer we encountered, after passing our outer line of pickets, was an express rider from General Sullivan's staff, one James Cook, who told us that the right division of the army, General James Clinton's New York Brigade, which was ours, was still slowly concentrating in the vicinity of Otsego Lake; that innumerable and endless diffi-

culties in obtaining forage and provisions had delayed everything; that the main division, Sullivan's, was now arriving at Easton and Wyoming, and that, furthermore, the enemy had become vastly agitated over these ominous preparations of ours, but still believed that we were preparing for an advance into Canada.

"Ha-ha!" said Boyd merrily. "So much the better, for if they continue to believe that, they will keep their cursed scalping parties snug at home."

"No, sir," said the express soberly. "Brant and his Mohawks are out somewhere or other, and so is Walter Butler and his painted crew."

The express rode on, and Boyd, in excellent humor, continued talking to me, saying that he knew our commander-in-chief, and that he was an officer not to be lightly swayed or turned from the main purpose, but would hew to the line, no matter what destruction raged about him.

"He must truly be a man of iron," said I, "if we win through."

"We will win through, Loskiel," he said gaily, "—to Catharinstown or paradise

—to hell or heaven. And what a tale to tell our children—we who survive!”

An odd expression came into his handsome face, and he said in a low and dreamy voice, “I think that almost every man will live to tell that story—yet, I can never hear myself telling the tale in years to come.”

On paths and new-made highways we began to encounter people and cattle—now a long line of oxen laden with military stores or with canoes and flatboats, and conducted by bat-men in smock and frock, now a sweating company of military surveyors from headquarters, burdened with compass, chain, and Jacob’s-staff, already running their lines into the wilderness. Here trudged the frightened family of some settler, making toward the forts; there, a company of troops came gaily marching out on some detail, or perhaps, with fixed bayonets, herded sheep and cattle down some rutted road.

It seemed scarce possible that we were already within scouting range of that never-to-be-forgotten region of Wyoming, where, just one year ago, old John Butler, with his rangers, his hell-born Senecas, and Johnson’s Greens, had done their bloody business; where, in “The Shades of Death,” a hundred frightened women and little children had perished in that ghastly darkness. Also, we were but a few miles from that scene of terror where, through the wintry dawn at Cherry Valley, young Walter Butler damned his soul for all eternity, while men, women, and children, old and young, died horribly amid the dripping knives and bayonets of his painted fiends, or fell under the butchering hatchets of his Senecas.

Just ahead of us the road from Mattisses’ grist-mill and Stoney Kill joined ours, where stood the Low Dutch church. Above us lay the Middle Fort, and the roads to Cherry Valley and Schenectady forked beyond it by the Lutheran church and the Lower Fort. We took the Cherry Valley road.

As we rode along, many faces we passed were familiar to us; we encountered officers from our own corps and from other regiments, with whom we were acquainted, and who greeted us gaily or otherwise, according to their temper and disposition. But everybody—officers, troops, bat-men—looked curiously at our Siwanos Indian, who returned the compliment not at all,

but with stately stride and expressionless visage moved straight ahead of him, as though he noticed nothing.

Twice since we had started at daybreak that morning, I had managed to lag behind and question him concerning the maid who now shared well-nigh every thought of mine—asking if he knew where she was, and where she came from, and why she journeyed, and whither.

He answered—when he replied at all—that he had no knowledge of these things. And I knew he lied, but did not know how I might make him speak.

Nor would he tell me how and when she had slipped away from me the night before, or where she had likely gone, pretending that I had been mistaken when I told him I had seen him watching us beside the star-illuminated stream.

“Sagamore,” I said earnestly, “this maid is no wild gipsy thing—no rose-tinted forest-pigeon. She has been bred at home, mannered, and schooled. She knows the cote, I tell you, and not the bush, where the wild hawk hangs mewing in the sky. Why has she fled to the wilderness alone?”

“How should I know?”

“You *do* know!”

“Loskiel,” he said, “if I know why, perhaps I know of other matters, too. Ask me some day—before they send you into battle.”

“What matters do you know of?”

“Ask me no more, Loskiel—until your conch horns blowing in the forest summon Morgan’s men to battle. Then ask; and a sagamore will answer—a Siwanos Mohican—of the Magic Clan. Hiero!”

That ended it; he had spoken, and I was not fool enough to urge him to another word.

And now, as I rode, my mind was still occupied with my growing concern for the poor child I had come to pity so. Within me a furtive tenderness was growing which sometimes shamed, sometimes angered me, or left me self-contemptuous, restless, or dully astonished that my pride permitted it. For in my heart such sentiments for such a maid as this—tenderness, consciousness of some subtlety about her that attracted me—should have no place. There was every reason why I should pity her and offer aid; none why her gray eyes should hold my own; none why the frail body of her in her rags should quicken any pulse of mine; none why my nearness to her should stop my heart and breath.

We were riding by the High Dutch church at last, and beyond, between the roads to Duanesboro and Cobuskill, we saw the tents and huts of the New York Brigade—or as much of it as had arrived—from which we expected soon to be detached.

On a cleared hill beyond the Lower Fort, where the Albany road runs beside the Foxkill, we saw the headquarters flag of the Fourth Brigade, and Major Nicholas Fish at his tent door, talking to McCrea, our brigade surgeon.

Along the stream were the huts lately tenanted by Colonel Philip Van Cortlandt's Second New York Regiment, which had gone off toward Wyalusing. Schott's riflemen camped there now, and, as we rode by, the soldiers stared at our Indian. Then we passed Gansevoort's Third Regiment, under tents and making ready to march, and the log cantonment of Colonel Lamb's artillery, where the cannoneers saluted; then, for no reason, cheered us. Beyond were camped Alden's regiment, I think, and in the rear the Fourth and Fifth New York. A fort flew our own regimental flag, beside the pretty banner of our new nation.

At the fort gate the sentry saluted, and we dismounted. Our junior ensign, Benjamin Chambers, a smart young dandy, met us at the guard-house, directed Boyd to Captain Simpson's log quarters, and then led the sagamore inside.

We seated ourselves on the gate-bench to wait the major's summons; the dandified young ensign crossed the parade, mincing toward the quarters of Major Parr.

Presently he came to us again, saying that the sagamore and I were to report ourselves to the major.

"Jimmy Parr is in good humor," he whispered. "Leave him in that temper, for mercy's sake, Loskiel; he's been scarcely amiable since you left to catch this six-foot savage for him."

He was a brave soldier, our major; a splendid officer, and a kind and Christian man, but in no wise inclined to overlook the delinquencies of youthful ensigns, and he had rapped our knuckles soundly more than once. But we all loved him in our small mess of five—Captain Simpson, Lieutenant Boyd, and we two ensigns—and I think he knew it. Had we disliked him, among ourselves we would have dubbed him James, intending thereby disrespect;

but to us he was Jimmy, flippantly, perhaps, but with a sure affection under all our impudence. And I think, too, that he knew we spoke of him among ourselves as Jimmy, and did not mind.

"Well, sir," he said sternly, as I entered with the sagamore and gave him the officer's salute, "I have a good report of you from Lieutenant Boyd. I am gratified, Mr. Loskiel, that my confidence in your ability and in your knowledge of the Indians was not misplaced. And you may inform me now, sir, how it is proper for me to address this Indian guide."

"Mayaro is a sagamore, Major," I said, "a noble and an ensign of a unique clan—the Siwanois, or Magic Clan of the Mohican tribe of the great Delaware nation. You may address him as an equal. Our General Schuyler would so address him."

Major Parr nodded, quietly offered his hand to the silent Siwanois, and, holding that warrior's sinewy fist in an iron grip that matched it, named him to Captain Simpson. Then, looking at me, he said slowly, in English:

"Mayaro is a great chief among his people—great in war, wise in council and debate. The sagamore of the Siwanois Mohicans is welcome in this army and at the headquarters of this regiment. He is now one of us; his pay is the pay of a captain in the Rifles. By order of General Clinton, commanding the Fourth, or New York, Brigade, I am requested to say to the Mohican sagamore that valuable presents will be offered him for his services by General Sullivan, commander-in-chief of this army. These will be given when the Mohican successfully conducts this army to the Genesee Castle and to Catharinestown. I have spoken."

And to me he added bluntly,

"Translate, Mr. Loskiel."

"I think the sagamore has understood, sir," said I. "Is it not so, Sagamore?"

"Mayaro has understood," said the Indian quietly.

"Does the great Mohican sagamore accept?"

"My elder brother," replied the sagamore calmly, "Mayaro has pledged his word to his younger brother Loskiel."

Boyd stood by, smiling, as the major very politely informed me of the disposition he had made of the sagamore and myself, recommended Mayaro to my most civil



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

I beheld the sagamore gravely repainting himself with the terrific emblems of death

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attention, and added that, for the present, I was relieved from routine duty.

If the Siwanos perceived any undue precaution in the major's manner of lodging him, he did not betray by the quiver of an eyelash that he comprehended he was practically under guard. He stalked forth and across the parade beside me, head high, bearing dignified and tranquil.

At the outer gate our junior ensign languidly dusted a speck of snuff from his wristband and indicated the roof of our hut, which was visible above the feathery river willows. So we proceeded thither, I resigning my horse to the soldier, Mount, who had been holding him, and who was now detailed to act as soldier-servant to me still.

I had been relieved of all routine duty, and was henceforth detailed to foregather with, amuse, instruct, and casually keep an eye on my Mohican. In other words, my only duty, for the present, was to act as mentor to the sagamore, keep him pleasantly affected toward our cause, see that he was not tampered with, and that he had his bellyful three times a day. Also, I was to extract from him, in advance, any information concerning the Iroquois country that he might have knowledge of.

It was a warm and pleasant afternoon along the river where the bateaux, loaded with stores and soldiers, were passing up, and Oneida canoes danced across the sparkling water toward Fort Plain.

Many of our soldiers were bathing, sporting like schoolboys in the water; Lamb's artillerymen had their horses out to let them swim; many of the troops were washing their shirts along the gravelly reaches, or, seated cross-legged on the bank, were mending rents with needle and thread. Half a dozen Oneida Indians sat gravely smoking and blinking at the scene—no doubt belonging to our corps of runners, scouts, and guides, for all were shaved, oiled, and painted for war.

Somber thoughts assailed me there on that sunny July afternoon; I rested my elbow on my knee, forehead pressed against my palm, pondering. And ever within my breast was I conscious of a faint, dull aching—a steady and perceptible apprehension which kept me restless, giving my mind no peace, my thoughts no rest.

That this shabby, wandering girl had so gained me, spite of the rudeness with

which she used me, I could never seem to understand, for she had done nothing to win even my pity, and she was but a ragged, gipsy thing, and had conducted with scant courtesy.

Why had I given her my ring? Was it only because I pitied her and desired to offer her a gift she might sell when necessary? Why had I used her as a comrade—who had been, but the comrade of an hour? Why had I been so loath to part with her whom I scarce had met? *What* was it in her that had fixed my attention? *What* allure? *What* unusual quality? *What* grace of mind or person?

A slender, gray-eyed gipsy thing in rags! And I could no longer rid my mind of her!

I remained there motionless, thinking, thinking—her faded rosebud lying in my hand, drooping but still fragrant.

Dismiss her from my thoughts I could not. The steady, relentless desire to see her, the continual apprehension that some mischance might overtake her, left me no peace of mind, so that the memory of her, not yet a pleasure even, nagged, nagged, nagged, till every nerve became unsteady.

I stretched out above the river bank, composing my body to rest—sleep, perhaps. But flies and sun kept me awake.

So up again, and walked to the hut door, where within I beheld the sagamore gravely repainting himself with the terrific emblems of death. He was seated cross-legged on the floor, my camp-mirror before him—a superb specimen of manhood.

"Mayaro," said I, amused, "is a battle, then, near at hand that you make so complete a preparation for it?"

A half-smile appeared for a moment on his lips,

"It is always well to be prepared for life or death, Loskiel, my younger brother."

"Sagamore," I said, "my heart is very anxious for the safety of this little forest-running maid. If I could find her, speak to her again, I think I might aid her."

Mayaro's features became smooth and blank.

"What maiden is this my younger brother fears for?" he asked mildly.

"Her name is Lois. You know well whom I mean."

"Hai!" he exclaimed, laughing softly.

"Is it still the rosy-throated pigeon of the forest for whom my little brother Loskiel is spreading nets?"

My face reddened again, but I said, smilingly:

"If Mayaro laughs at what I say, all must be well with her. My elder brother's heart is charitable to the homeless."

"And to children, also," he said very quietly. And added, with a gleam of humor: "All children, O Loskiel, my *littlest* brother! Is not my heart open to you?"

"And mine to you, Mayaro, my elder brother."

"Yet, you watched me at the fire every night," he said, with keenest delight sparkling in his dark eyes.

"And yet I tracked and caught you, after all," I said, smiling through my slight chagrin.

"Is my little brother very sure I did not know he followed me?" he asked, amused.

"Did you know, Mayaro?"

The Siwanois made a movement of slight, but good-humored, disdain.

"Can my brother, who has no wings, track and follow the October swallow?"

"Then you were willing that I should see the person to whom you brought food under the midnight stars?"

"My brother has spoken."

"Why were you willing that I should see?"

"Where there are wild pigeons there are hawks, Loskiel. But perhaps the rosy throat could not understand the language of a Siwanois."

"You warned her not to rove alone?"

He inclined his head quietly.

"She refused to heed you? Is that true?"

"Loskiel does not lie."

"She must be mad!" I said, with some heat. "Had she not managed to keep our camp in view, what had become of her now, Sagamore? Of course I know that you must have kept in communication with her—though how you did so I do not know."

The Siwanois smiled slyly.

"Who is she? What is she, Mayaro? Can you not tell me something concerning her?"

The Indian made no reply.

"Has she made you promise not to?"

He did not answer, but I saw very plainly that this was so.

Mystified, perplexed, and more deeply troubled than I cared to admit to myself, I rose from the door-sill, buckled on belt,

knife, and hatchet, and stood looking out over the river in silence for a while.

The Siwanois said pleasantly, yet with a hidden hint of malice:

"If my brother desires to walk abroad in the pleasant weather, Mayaro will not run away. Say so to Major Parr."

I blushed furiously at the mocking revelation that he had noted and understood the precautions of Major Parr.

"Mayaro," I said, "I trust you. See! You are confided to me. I am responsible for you. If you leave I shall be disgraced. But—Siwanois are free people. The sagamore is my elder brother who will not blacken my face or cast contempt upon my uniform. See! I trust my brother Mayaro. I go."

The sagamore looked me square in the eye with a face which was utterly blank and expressionless. Then he gathered his legs under him, sprang noiselessly to his feet, laid his right hand on the hilt of my knife, and his left one on his own, drew both bright blades with a simultaneous and graceful movement, and drove his knife into my sheath, mine into his own.

My heart stood still; I had never expected even to witness such an act—never dared believe that I should participate in it.

The Siwanois drew my knife from his sheath, touched the skin of his wrist with the keen edge. I followed his example; on our wrists two bright spots of blood beaded the skin.

Then the sagamore filled a tin cup with clean water and extended his wrist. A single drop of blood fell into it. I did the same.

Then, in silence still, he lifted the cup to his lips, tasted it, and passed it to me. I wet my lips, offered it to him again. And very solemnly he sprinkled the scarcely tinted contents over the grass at the door-sill.

So was accomplished between this Mohican and myself the rite of blood-brotherhood—an alliance of implicit trust and mutual confidence which only death could end.

VI

It happened the following afternoon that, having written in my journal and dressed me in my best, I left the Mohican in the hut a-painting and shining up his

weapons, and walked abroad to watch the remaining troops and the artillery start for Otsego Lake.

A foot regiment—Colonel Gansevoort's—had struck tents and marched with its drums and colors early that morning, carrying also the regimental wagons and bateaux. However, I had been told that this veteran regiment was not to go with the army into the Iroquois country, but was to remain as a protection to Tryon County. But now Colonel Lamb's remaining section of artillery was to march to the lake, and whether this indicated that our army at last was fairly in motion, nobody knew.

A motley assembly had gathered to see them march out; our General Clinton and his staff, in the blue and buff of the New York Line, had come over, and all the officers and soldiers off duty, too, as well as the people of the vicinity, and a horde of workmen, bateaux-men, and forest-runners, including a dozen Oneida Indians of the guides.

Poor Alden's Sixth Massachusetts foot regiment, which was just leaving for the lake on its usual road-mending detail, stood in spiritless silence to see the artillery pass; their major, Whiting, as well as the sullen rank and file, seeming still to feel the disgrace of Cherry Valley.

As for us of Morgan's, we were very sorry for the mortified New Englanders, yet not at all forgetful of their carping and insolent attitude toward the ragged New York Line—where at least the majority of our officers were gentlemen, and where proper and military regard for rank was most decently maintained. Gad! To hear your New Englander talk, a man might think that this same war was being maintained and fought by New England alone.

The artillery jolted and clinked away down the rutty road, which their wheels and horses cut into new and deeper furrows; a veil of violet dust hung in their wake, through which harness, cannon, and drawn cutlass glittered and glimmered like sunlit ripples through a mist.

Then came our riflemen marching as escort, smart and gay in their brown forest-dress, the green thrums rippling and flying from sieve and legging and open double cape, and the raccoon tails all a-bobbing behind their caps like the tails that April lambskins wriggle.

I stood at a salute as our major and Captain Simpson strode by; grinned ever so little as Boyd came swinging along, his naked cutlass drawn, scarlet fringes tossing on his painted cape. He whispered as he passed:

"Murphy and Elerson took two scalps last night. They're drying on hoops in the barracks. Look and see if they be truly Seneca."

At that I was both startled and disgusted; but it was well-nigh impossible to prevent certain of our riflemen who had once been wood-runners from treating the Iroquois as the Iroquois treated them. And they continued to scalp them as naturally as they once had clipped pads and ears from panther and wolf. Mount and the rifleman Renard no longer did it, and I had thought to have persuaded Murphy and Elerson to conduct more becoming. But it seemed that I had failed.

My mind was filled with resentful thought as I entered the Lower Fort and started across the swarming parade toward the barracks, meaning to have a look at these ghastly trophies and judge to what nation they belonged.

Half-way across, a young woman bearing a gunny sack full of linen garments and blankets to be washed blocked my passage, and, being a woman, I naturally gave her right of way—and the next instant I saw it was Lois.

She had averted her head and was now hurriedly passing on, and I turned sharply on my heel and came up beside her.

"Lois," I managed to say, with a voice that was fairly steady, "have you forgotten me?"

Her head remained resolutely averted; and as I continued beside her, she said, without looking at me:

"Do you not understand that you are disgracing yourself by speaking to me on the parade? Pass on, sir, for your own sake."

"I desire to speak to you," I said obstinately.

"No. Pass on."

My face, I know, was fiery red, and for an instant all the ridicule, the taunts, the shame which I might well be storing up for myself, burned there for anyone to see. But stronger than fear of ridicule rose a desperate determination not to lose this maid again.

"I wish to talk with you," I said doggedly. "I shall not let you go this time."

"Are you mad to so conduct under the eyes of the whole fort?" she whispered.

"I'd be madder yet to let you get away again. My way is yours."

She halted, cheeks blazing, and looked at me for the first time.

"I ask you not to persist," she said, "for my sake, if not for yours. What an officer or a soldier says to a girl in this fort makes her a trull in the eyes of any man who sees. Do you so desire to brand me, Mr. Loskiel?"

"No," I said, between my teeth, and turned to leave her. And, I think, it was something in my face that made her whisper low and hurriedly:

"Waiontha spring. If you needs must see me for a moment more, come there."

I scarcely heard, so tight emotion had me by the throat, and walked on blindly, all aquiver. Yet in my ears the strange words sounded, "Waiontha—Waiontha—come to the spring Waiontha—if you needs must see me."

On a settle before the green-log barracks, some of Schott's riflemen were idling, and now stood, seeing an officer.

"Boys," I said, "where is this latest foolery of Tim Murphy hung to dry?"

They seemed ashamed, but told me.

As I moved on, I said carelessly,

"Where is the spring Waiontha?"

"On the lake trail, sir—first branch of the Stoney Kill."

"Is there a house there?"

"Rannock's. Rannock is dead. The destructives murdered him when they burned Cherry Valley. Mrs. Rannock brings us eggs and milk."

I walked on and entered the smoky barracks, and the first thing I saw was a pair of scalps, stretched and hooped, a-dangling from the rafters.

Doubtless, Murphy and Elerson meant to sew them to their bullet-pouches when cured and painted. And there was one reckless fellow in my company who wore a baldrick fringed with Shawanese scalps; but as these same Shawanese had murdered his father, mother, grandmother, and three little brothers, no officer rebuked him.

I looked closely at the ornamented scalps, despite my repugnance. They were not Mohawk, not Cayuga, or Onondaga. Nor did they seem to me like Seneca, being not

oiled and braided clean, but tagged at the root with the claws of a tree-lynx. They were not Oneida, not Lenape. Therefore, they must be Seneca scalps. Which meant that Walter Butler and that spawn of Satan, Sayanquarata, were now prowling around our outer pickets. For the ferocious Senecas and their tireless war-chief, Sayanquarata, were Butler's people.

Suddenly a shaft of fear struck me like a swift arrow in the breast, as I thought of Butler and of his Mountain Snakes, and of that mad child, Lois, a-gipsying whither her silly inclination led her.

"This time," I muttered, "I shall put a stop to all her forest running!" And, at the thought, I turned and passed swiftly through the doorway, across the thronged parade, and out of the gate.

Hastening my pace along the lake road, meeting many people at first, then fewer, then nobody at all, I presently crossed the first little brook that feeds the Stoney Kill, leaping from stone to stone. Here, in the woods, lay the Oneida camp. I saw some squaws there sewing.

After a few moments following the path, I found that the field ended abruptly, and the solid walls of the forest rose once more, like green cliffs, towering on every side. And at their base I saw a house of logs, enclosed within a low, brush fence, and before it a field of brush.

Shirts and soldiers' blankets lay here and there a-drying on the bushes; a wretched garden-patch showed intensely green between a waste of fire-blackened stumps. This doubtless must be the outlet to Waiontha spring, for there to the left a green lane had been bruised through the elder thicket; and this I followed, shouldering my way amid fragrant blossom and sun-hot foliage, then through an alder run, and suddenly out across a gravel reach where water glimmered in a still and golden pool. Lois knelt there on the bank. The soldiers' linen I had seen in her arms was piled beside her. In a basket I saw a heap of clean, wet shirts and tow-cloth rifle-frocks.

She heard me behind her—I took care that she should—but she made no sign that she had heard or knew that I was there. Even when I spoke she continued busy with her suds and shirts; and I walked around the gravelly basin and seated myself near her.

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"Well?" she asked, still scrubbing, and her hair was fallen in curls about her brow—hair thicker and brighter, though scarce longer, than my own. But Lord! The wild-rose beauty that flushed her cheeks as she labored there! And when she at last looked up at me, her eyes seemed like two gray stars, full of reflections from the golden pool.

"I have come," said I, "to speak most seriously."

"What is it you wish?"

"A comrade's privilege."

"And what may that be, sir?"

"The right to be heard, the right to be answered—and a comrade's privilege to offer aid."

"I need no aid."

"None living can truthfully say that," said I pleasantly.

"Oh! Do *you*, then, require charity from this pleasant world we live in?"

"I did not offer charity to you."

"You spoke of aid," she said coldly.

"Lois—is there in our brief companionship no memory that may warrant my speaking as honestly as I speak to you?"

"I know of none. Do you?"

I had been looking at her chilled pink fingers. My ring was gone.

"A ring for a rose is my only warrant," I said.

She continued to soap the linen and to scrub in silence. After she had finished the garment and wrung it dry, she straightened her supple figure where she was kneeling, and, turning toward me, searched in her bosom with one little, wet hand, drawing from it a faded ribbon on which my ring hung.

"Do you desire to have it of me again?" she asked.

"What? The ring?"

"Aye."

"Desire it!" I repeated, turning red. "No more than you desire the withered bud you left beside me while I slept."

"What bud, sir?"

"Did you not leave me a rosebud?"

"I?"

"And a bit of silver-birchbark scratched with a knife point?"

"Now that I think of it, perhaps I may have done so—or some such thing—scarce knowing what I was about—and being sleepy. What was it that I wrote? I cannot now remember—being so sleepy when I did it."

"And that is all you thought about it, Lois?"

"How can one think when half asleep?"

"Here is your rose," I said angrily.

"I will take my ring again."

She opened her gray eyes at that.

"Lord!" she murmured, in an innocent and leisurely surprise. "You have it still, my rose? Are roses scarce where you inhabit, sir?"

"Why do you mock me, Lois?"

"I? Mock *you*!"

"You do so! You have done so ever since we met. I ask you why."

"Lord!" she murmured, shaking her head. "The young man is surely going stark! A girl in my condition—such a girl as I mock at an *officer* and a *gentleman*? No, it is beyond all bounds, and this young man is suffering from the sun."

"Were it not," said I angrily, "that common humanity brought me here and bids me remain for the moment, I would not endure this."

"Heaven save us all!" she sighed.

"Listen to me!" I broke out bluntly.

"I know not who or what you are, why you are here, whither you are bound. But this I do know: that beyond our pickets there is peril in these woods, and it is madness for man or maid to go alone as you do."

The laughter had died out in her face. After a moment it became grave.

"Was it to tell me this that you spoke to me in the fort, Mr. Loskiel?" she asked.

"Yes. Two days ago our pickets were fired on by Indians. Last night two riflemen of our corps took as many Seneca scalps. Do you suppose that when I heard of these affairs I did not think of you—remembering what was done but yesterday at Cherry Valley?"

"Did you—remember—*me*?"

"Good God, yes!" I exclaimed, my nerves on edge again at the mere memory of her rashness. "I came here as a comrade—wishing to be of service, and—you have used me—"

"Vilely," she said, looking serenely at me.

"I did not say *that*, Lois—"

"I say it, Mr. Loskiel. And yet—I told you where to find me. That is much for me to tell to any man. Let that count a little to my damaged credit with you. And—I still wear the ring you gave. And left a rose for you. Let these things count a little in my favor. For you can scarcely



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

Lois knelt there on the bank. . She heard me behind her—I took care that she should—but she made no sign that she had heard or knew that I was there

guess how much of courage it had cost me." She knelt there, her bared arms hanging by her side, the sun bright on her curls, staring at me out of those strange gray eyes.

"Since I have been alone," she said, in a low voice, "no man—unless by a miracle it be you—has offered me a service or a kindness except that he awaited his reward. Soon or late their various songs became the same familiar air. It is the only song I've heard from men—with endless variations, truly, often and cunningly disguised—yet ever the same and sorry theme. Men are what God made them; God has seemed to fashion me to their liking—I scarce know how—seeing I walk in rags, unkempt, and stained with wind and rain, and leaf and earth and sun—"

"Lois," I said, trying to think clearly, "I do not know that other men and I are different. Once I believed so. But—late—late—I do not know. Yet, I know this: selfish or otherwise, I cannot endure the thought of you in peril."

She looked at me very gravely; then dropped her head once more.

"I don't know," I said desperately; "I wish to be honest—tell you no lie—tell none to myself. I—your beauty—*has* touched me—or whatever it is about you that attracts. And, whatever gown you go in, I scarcely see it—somehow—finding you so—so strangely—lovely—in speech also—and in—every way."

She looked up so suddenly that I ceased speaking, fearful of a rebuff; but saw only the grave, gray eyes looking straight into mine, and a sudden, deeper color waning from her cheeks.

"Whatever I am," said I, "I can be what I will. Else I were no man. If your—beauty—has moved me, that need not concern you—and surely not alarm you. A woman's beauty is her own affair. Men take their chance with it—as I take mine with yours—that it do me no deep damage. And if it do, or do not, our friendship is still another matter; for it means that I wish you well, desire to aid you, ease your burdens, make you secure and safe, vary your solitude with a friendly word—I mean, Lois, to be to you a real comrade, if you will. Will you?"

After a moment she said,

"What was it that you said about my—beauty?"

"I take my chances that it do me no deep damage."

"Oh! Am I to take my chance, too?"

"What chance?"

"That—your kindness do *me*—no damage?"

"What senseless talk is this you utter?"

She shook her head slowly, then:

"What a strange boy! I do not fear you."

I stared at her, then laughed.

"Ask yourself how far you need have dread of me—when, if you desire it, you can leave me dumb, dismayed, lip-bound by your mocking tongue—which God knows well I fear."

"Is my tongue so bitter, then? I did not know it."

"I know it," said I, with angry emphasis.

"And I tell you very freely that—"

She stole a curious glance at me. Something halted me—an expression I had never yet seen there in her face, twitching at her lips—hovering on them now—parting them in a smile so sweet and winning that, silenced by the gracious transformation, unexpected, I caught my breath, astonished.

"What is your given name?" she asked, still dimpling at me, and her eyes now but two blue wells of light.

"Euan," I said, foolish as a flattered schoolboy, and as awkward.

"Euan," she said, still smiling at me, "I think that I could be your friend—if you do truly wish it. What is it you desire of me? Ask me once more, and make it very clear and plain."

"Only your confidence—that is all."

"Oh! Is *that* all you ask of me?" she mimicked mockingly; but so sweet her smile and soft her voice, that I did not mind her words.

"Remember," said I, "that I am older than you. You are to tell me all that troubles you."

"When?"

"Now."

"No. I have my washing to complete. And you must go. Besides, I have mending, darning, and my knitting yet to do. It all means bed and bait to me."

"Will you not tell me why you are alone here, Lois?"

"Tell you what? Tell you why I loiter by our soldiers' camps like any painted drab? I will tell you this much: I need no longer play that shameless rôle."

"You need not use those words in the same breath when speaking of yourself," I answered hotly.

"Then—you do not credit ill of me?" she asked, a bright but somewhat fixed and painful smile on her red lips.

"No!" said I bluntly. "Nor did I ever."

"And yet I look the part, and seem to play it, too. And still you believe me honest!"

"I know you are."

"Then why should I be here alone—if I am honest, Euan?"

"I do not know—tell me."

"But—are you quite certain that you do not ask because you doubt me?"

I said impatiently: "I ask, knowing already you are good above reproach. I ask so I may understand how best to aid you."

A lovely color stole into her cheeks.

"You are kind, Euan. And it is true—though—" and she shrugged her shoulders, "what other man would credit it?" She lifted her head a little.

"Come to me to-night, Euan," she said. "I lodge yonder. There is a poor widow there—a Mrs. Rannock—who took me in. They killed her husband in November. I am striving to repay her for the food and shelter she affords me. I have been given mending and washing at the fort. You see I am no leech to fasten on a body and nourish me for nothing: So I do what I am able. Will you come to me this night?"

"Yes." But I could not yet speak steadily.

"Come then; I—I will tell you something of my miserable condition—if you desire to know. And—if you please, will you leave me now? I must do my washing and mending—and—" she smiled, "if you only knew how desperately I need what money I may earn. My garments, Euan, are like to fall from me if these green cockspur thorns give way."

"But Lois," I said, "I have brought you money!" And I fished from my hunting-shirt a great, thick packet of those poor paper dollars, now in such contempt that scarce five hundred of them counted for a dozen good, hard shillings.

"What are you doing?" she said, so coldly that I ceased counting the little squares of currency and looked up at her surprised.

"I am sharing my pay with you," said I.

"I cannot take—money!"

"What?"

"Did you suppose I could?"

"Comrades have a common purse. Why not?"

"No—I cannot, Euan," she answered, in a stifled voice.

"Is there any shame to you in sharing with me?"

"Wait," she whispered. "Wait till you hear. And—thank you—for—your kindness."

"I will be here to-night," I said. "And when we know each other better we will share a common purse."

She did not answer me.

I lingered for a moment, desiring to reassure and comfort her, but knew not how. And so, as she did not turn, I finally went away through the sunlit willows, leaving her kneeling there alone beside the golden pool, her bright head drooping and her hands still covering her face.

As I walked back slowly to the fort, I pondered how to be of aid to her, and knew not how. Had there been the ladies of any officers with the army now, I should have laid her desperate case before them; but all had gone back to Albany before our scout of three returned from Westchester.

Yet, somehow her safety must be now arranged, her worth and virtue clearly understood, her needs and dire necessities made known, so that when our army moved she might find a shelter, kind and respectable, within the Middle Fort or at Schenectady or anywhere inside our lines.

My pay was small; yet, having no soul dependent on my bounty and needing little myself, I had saved these pitiable dollars that our Congress paid us. Besides, I had a snug account with my solicitor in Albany. She might live on that. I did not need it; seldom drew a penny, my pay more than sufficing. And, after the war had ended—ended—

Just here my heart beat out o' step, and thought was halted for a moment. But with the warm thought and warmer blood tingling me once again, I knew and never doubted that we had not done with one another yet, nor were like to, war or no war. For in all the world, and through all the years of youth, I had never before encountered any woman who had shared



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

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The Hidden Children

with me my waking thoughts and the last conscious moment ere I slept. But from the time I lost this woman out of my life, something seemed also missing from the world. And when again I found her, life and the world seemed balanced and well rounded once again. And in my breast a strange calm rested me.

As I walked along the rutty lake road, all hatched and gashed by the artillery, I made up my mind to one matter. "She must have clothes" thought I, "and that's flat!" Perhaps not such as befitted her, but something immediate, and not in tatters—something stout that threatened not to part and leave her naked. For the brier-torn rags she wore scarce seemed to hold together.

Coming from the fort, I had already noticed the group on the Stoney Kill, where our Oneidas lay encamped. So when I sighted the first painted tree and saw the stone pipe hanging, I made for it, and found there the Indians smoking pipes and not in war-paint; and their women and children were busy with their gossip, near at hand.

As I had guessed, there by the fire lay a soft and heavy pack of doeskins, open, and a pretty Oneida matron sewing Dutch wampum on a painted sporran for her warrior lord.

The lean and silent warriors came up as I approached, sullenly at first, not knowing what treatment to expect—more shame to the skin we take our pride in!

One after another took the hand I offered in self-respecting silence.

"Brothers," I said, "I come to buy. Sooner or later your young men will put on red paint and oil their bodies. Even now I see your rifles and your hatchets have been polished. Sooner or later the army will move four hundred miles through a wilderness so dark that neither sun nor moon nor stars can penetrate. The old men, the women, the children, and the littlest ones still strapped to the cradle-board, must then remain behind. Is it the truth I speak, my brothers?"

"It is the truth," they answered very quietly.

"Then," said I, "they will require food and money to buy with. Is it not true, Oneidas?"

"It is true, brother."

I smiled and turned toward the women who were listening, and who now looked up at me with merry faces.

"I have," said I, "four hundred dollars. It is for the Oneida maid or matron who will sell to me her pretty bridal dress of doeskin—the dress which she has made and laid aside and never worn."

Two or three girls leaped laughing to their feet; but, "Wait!" said I. "This is for my little sister, and I must judge you where you stand, Oneida forest flowers, so I may know which one among you is most like my little sister in height and girth and narrow feet."

"Is our elder brother's little sister fat and comely?" inquired one giggling and overplump Oneida maid.

"Not plump," I said, and they all giggled.

Another short one stood on tiptoe, asking bashfully if she were not the proper height to suit me.

But there was a third, graceful and slender, who had risen with the rest, and who seemed to me nearer a match to Lois.

At a smiling nod from me she hastened into the family lodge, and presently reappeared with the cherished clothing. Fresh and soft and new, she cast the garments on the moss and spread them daintily and proudly to my view, for me to mark her wondrous handiwork. And it was truly pretty—from the soft, wampumbroidered shirt with its hanging thrums, to the clinging skirt and delicate thigh-moccasin, wonderfully fringed with purple and inset in most curious designs with painted quills and beads, and blue-diamond fronds from feathers of a little jay-bird's wing.

Bit by bit I counted out the currency; and it took some little time. But when it was done she took it eagerly enough, laughing her thanks and dancing away toward her lodge.

Once more at my own hut door, I entered, with a nod to Mayaro, who sat smoking there in freshened war-paint. One quick and penetrating glance he darted at the Oneida garment on my arm.

"Well, Mayaro," said I, in excellent spirits, "you still wear war-paint hopefully, I see. But this army will never start within the week."

The Siwanois smiled to himself and smoked. Then he passed the pipe to me. I drew it twice, rendered it.

"Are you hoping to go out with the scout to-night?" I asked. "That would not do."

"I go to-night with my brother Loskiel—to take the air," he said slyly.

"That may not be," I protested, disconcerted. "I have business abroad to-night."

"And I," he said very seriously; but he glanced again at the pretty garments on my arm and gave me a merry look.

"Yes," said I smilingly, "they are for *her*. The little lady hath no shoon, no skirt that holds together, save by the grace of cockspur thorns that bind the tatters. Those I have bought of an Oneida girl. And if they do not please her, yet these, at least, will hold together. And I shall presently write a letter to Albany and send it by the next bateau to my solicitor, who will purchase for her garments far more suitable, and send them to the fort."

The sagamore's face had become smooth and expressionless. I laid aside the garments, fished out quill and inkhorn, and, lying flat on the ground, wrote my letter to Albany, describing carefully the maid who was to be fitted, her height, the smallness of her waist and foot, as well as I remembered. I wrote, too, that she was thin, but not too thin. Also I bespoke a box of French hair-powder for her, and buckled shoes of Paddington, and stockings, and a kerchief.

"You know better than do I," I wrote, "having a sister to care for, how women dress. They should have shifts, and hair-pegs, and a scarf, and fan, and stays, and scent, and hankers, and a small laced hat, not gilded; cloak, foot-mantle, sun-mask, and a chip hat to tie beneath the chin, and one such as they call after the pretty Mistress Gunning. If women wear banyans, I know not; but whatever they do wear in their own privacy at morning chocolate, in the French fashion and whatever they do sleep in, buy and box and send to me. And all the money banked with you, put it in her name as well as mine, so that her drafts on it may all be honored. And this is her name—"

I stopped, dismayed. I did not know her name! And I was about to sign for her full power to share my every penny! Yet, my amazing madness did not strike me as amazing or grotesque, that, within the hour, a maid in a condition such as hers was to divide my tidy fortune with me. Nay, more—for when I signed this letter she would be free to take what she desired and even leave me destitute.

I laughed at the thought—so midsummer mad was I upon that sunny July afternoon; and within me, like a hidden thicket full of birds, my heart was singing wondrous tunes I never knew one note of.

"O Sagamore," I said, lifting my head, "tell me her surname now, because I need it for this business. And I forgot to ask her at the spring Waiontha."

For a full minute the Indian's countenance turned full on me remained moon-blank. Then, like lightning, flashed his smile.

"Loskiel, my friend, and now my own blood-brother, what magic singing birds have so enchanted your two ears. She is but a child, lonely and ragged—a tattered leaf still green, torn from the stem by storm and stress, blown through the woodlands and whirled here and yonder by every breath of wind. Is it fit that my brother Loskiel should notice such a woman?"

"She is in need, my brother."

"Give, and pass on, Loskiel."

"That is not giving, O my brother!"

"Is it to give alone, Loskiel? Or is it to give—that she may render all?"

"Yes, honestly to give. *Not to take.*"

"And yet you know her not, Loskiel."

"Then tell me her name, that I may write it to my friend in Albany."

"I do not know it," he said quietly.

"She never told you?"

"Never," he said. "Listen, Loskiel. What I now tell to you with heart all open and my tongue unloosened, is all I know of her. It was in winter that she came to Phillipsburgh, all wrappd in her red cloak. The White Plains Indians were there, and she was ever at their camp asking the same and endless question."

"What question, Mayaro?"

"That I shall also tell you, for I overheard it. But none among the White Plains company could answer her; no, nor no Congress soldier that she asked."

"The soldiers were not unkind; they offered food and fire—as soldiers do, Loskiel," he added, with a flash of contempt.

"I know," I said. "Continue."

"I offered shelter," he said simply. "I am a Siwanois. No women need to dread Mohicans. She learned this truth from me for the first time, I think. Afterward, pitying her, I watched her how she went from camp to camp. Some gave her mending to do, some washing, enabling



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

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The Hidden Children

her to live. I drew clothing and arms and rations as a Hudson guide enrolled, and together she and I made out to live. Then, in the spring, Major Lockwood summoned me to carry intelligence between the lines. And she came with me, asking at every camp the same strange question."

He leaned forward, looking at me steadily.

"Loskiel," he said, "when first I heard *your* name from her, and that it was *you* who wanted Mayaro, suddenly it seemed to me that magic was being made. And—I myself gave her her answer—the answer to the question she had asked at every camp."

"Good God!" said I, "did *you* then know the answer all the while?"

"I knew," he said tranquilly, "but I did not know why this maiden wished to know. Therefore was I silent."

"Why did you not ask her?" But before he spoke I knew why, too.

"Does a sagamore ask idle questions of a woman?" he said coldly. "Do the Siwanos babble? A Mohican considers ere his tongue is loosed."

"Aye—it is your nature, Sagamore. But tell me—what was it in the mention of my name that made you think of magic?"

"Loskiel, you came two hundred miles to ask of me the question that this maid had asked in every camp."

"What question?"

"*Where lay the trail to Catharinstown.*"

"Did *she* ask that?" I demanded.

"It was ever the burden of her piping—this rosy-throated pigeon of the woods."

"That is most strange," said I.

"It is doubtless sorcery that she should ask of me an interview with you, who came two hundred miles to ask of *me* the very question."

"But, Mayaro, she did not then know why I had come to seek you."

"I knew as quickly as I heard your name."

"How could you know before you saw me and I had once made plain my business?"

"Birds come and go; but eagles see their natal nest once more before they die."

"I do not understand you, Mayaro."

He made no answer.

"Merely to hear my name from this child's lips, you say you guessed my business with you?"

"Surely, Loskiel—surely. It was all done

by magic. And, at once, I knew that I should also speak to her, there in the storm, and answer her her question."

"And did you do so?"

"Yes, Loskiel. I said to her: 'Little sad rosy-throated pigeon of the woods, the vale Yndaia lies by a hidden river in the west. *Some call it Catharinstown.*'"

I shook my head, perplexed and understanding nothing.

"Yndaia? Did you say Yndaia, Mayaro?"

Then, as he looked me steadily in the eye, my gaze became uneasy, shifted, fell by an accident upon the blood-red bear, reared on his hind legs, pictured upon his breast. And through and through me passed a shock, like the dull thrill of some forgotten thing clutched suddenly by memory—yet clutched in vain.

Vain was the struggle, too, for the faint gleam passed from my mind as it had come; and if the name Yndaia had disturbed me, or seeing the scarlet ensign on his breast, or perhaps both coupled, had seemed to stir some distant memory, I did not know. Only it seemed as though, in mental darkness, I had felt the presence of some living and familiar thing—been conscious of its nearness for an instant, ere it had vanished utterly.

The sagamore's face had become a smooth, blank mask again.

"What has this maid, Lois, to do with Catharinstown?" I asked. "Devils live there in darkness."

"She did not say."

"You do not know?"

"No, Loskiel."

"But," said I, troubled, "why did she journey hither?"

"Because she now believes that only I in all the world could guide her to the vale Yndaia; and that one day I will pity her and take her there."

"Doubtless," I said anxiously, "she has heard at the forts or hereabouts that we are to march on Catharinstown."

"She knows it now, Loskiel."

"And means to follow?" I exclaimed, in horror.

"My brother speaks the truth."

"God! What urges the child thither?"

"I do not know, Loskiel. It seems as though a madness were upon her that she must go to Catharinstown. I tell you there is sorcery in all this. I say it—I,

a sagamore of the Enchanted Wolf. Who should know magic when it stirs but I, of the Siwanois—the Magic Clan? Say what you will, my comrade and blood-brother, there is sorcery abroad; and well I know who wrought it." He shuddered slightly. "There by the black waters of the lake—*that hag*—and all her spawn!"

"Catharine Montour!"

"The toad-woman herself—and all her spawn."

"The Senecas?"

"And *the others*," he said, in a low voice.

A sudden and terrible misgiving assailed me. I swallowed, and then said slowly:

"Two scalps were taken late last night by Murphy and Elerson. And the scalps were not of the Mohawk, not Oneida, or Onondaga, or Cayuga. Mayaro!" I gasped, "so help me God, those scalps are never Seneca!"

"Erie!" he exclaimed, with a mixture of rage and horror. And I saw his sinewy hand quivering on his knife-hilt. "Listen, Loskiel! I knew it! If those two scalps be Erie, then where the Cat people creep their sorcerer will be found."

"Amochol," I repeated, under my breath, and shivered.

For, deep in the secret shadows of that dreadful place where this vile hag, Catharine Montour, ruled it in Catharinetown, dwelt also all that now remained of the Cat nation—Eries—people of the Cat—a dozen, it was rumored, scarcely more—and demons all, serving that horrid warlock, Amochol, the sorcerer of the Senecas.

What dreadful rites this red priest and his Eries practised there, none knew, unless it were true that the False Faces knew. But rumor whispered with a thousand tongues of horrors, viewless, nameless, inconceivable; and that, far to the westward, Biskoonah yawned, so close, indeed, to the world's surface that the waters boiling deep in hell burst into burning fountains in the magic garden where the red priest made his sorcery, alone.

These things I had heard, but vaguely, here and there—a word, perhaps, at Johnson Hall, a whisper at Fort Johnson, rumors discussed at Guy Park and Schenectady when I was young. But ever the same horror of it filled me, though I believed it not, knowing full well there were no witches, sorcerers, or warlocks in the world.

"Mayaro," I said seriously, "do you go instantly to the fort and view those scalps."

"Were the braids fastened at the roots with tree-cat claws?"

"Aye!"

"No need to view them, then, Loskiel."

"Are they truly Erie?"

"Cats!" He spat the word from his lips and his eyes blazed.

"And—Amochol!" I asked unsteadily.

"The Cat people creep with the Seneca high priest, mewing under the moon."

"Then—*he* is surely here?"

"Aye, Loskiel."

"God!" said I, now all aquiver; "only to slay him! Only to glimpse his scarlet rags fairly along my rifle-sight!"

"No bullets touch him."

"That is nonsense, Mayaro——"

"No, Loskiel."

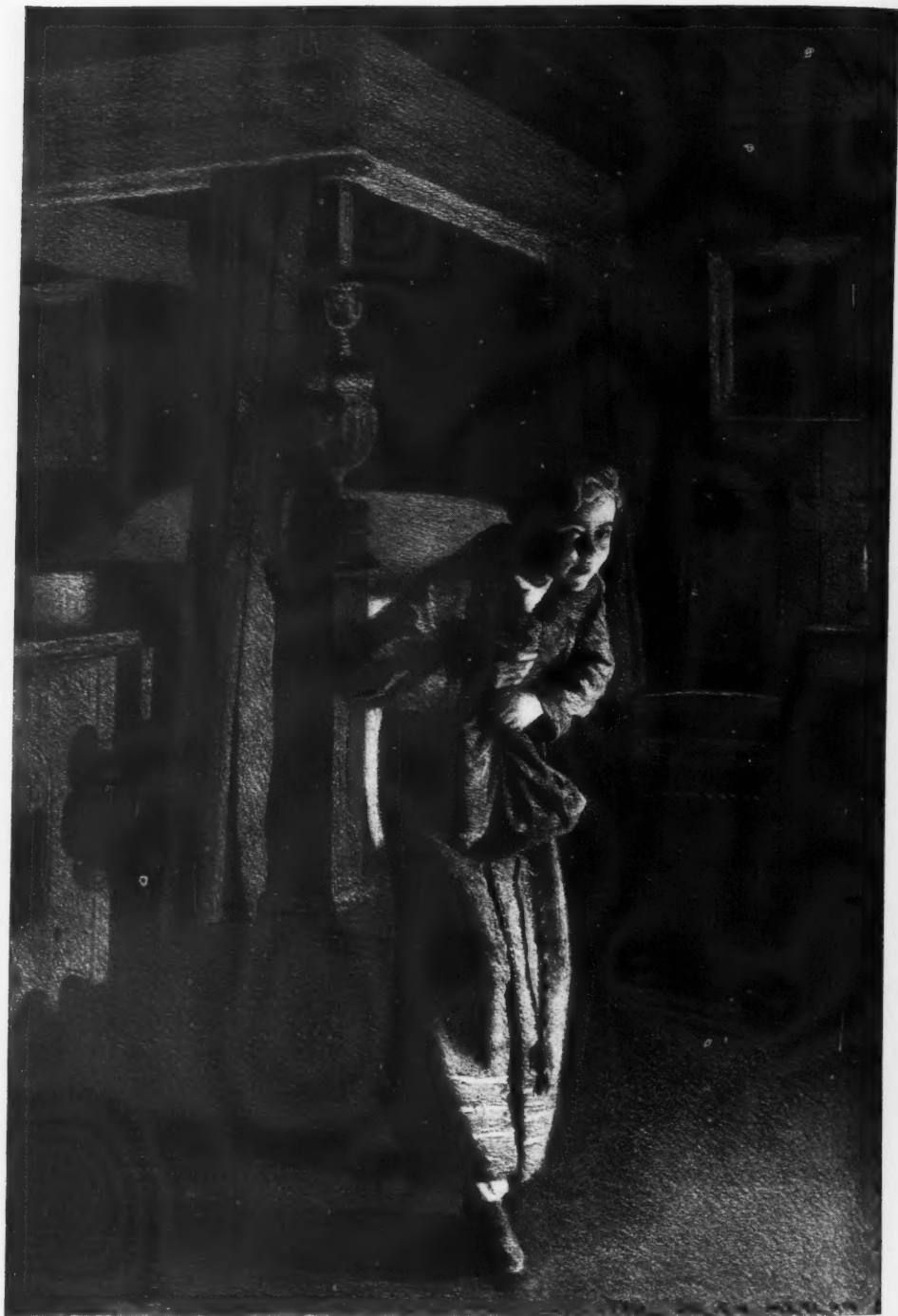
"I tell you he is human! There are no sorcerers on earth. There never were—except the witch of Endor."

"I never heard of her. But the witch of Catharinetown is living. And her warlock offspring, Amochol!" He squared his broad shoulders, shaking them. "What do I care?" he said. "I am a sagamore of the Enchanted Clan!" He struck the painted symbol on his chest. "What do I care for this red-priest's sorcery—I, who wear the Great Witch Bear rearing in scarlet here across my breast!"

"And I say to you, O my blood-brother, that between this sorcerer and me is now a war such as no Mohican ever waged, and no man living, white or red, has ever seen. His magic will I fight with magic; his knife and hatchet shall be turned on mine. And I shall deceive and trick and mock him—him and his Erie Cats, till one by one their scalps shall swing above a clean Mohican fire. O Loskiel, my brother and my other self, a warrior and a sagamore has spoken. Go, now, to your evening tryst in peace and leave me. For in my ears the Seven Chiefs are whispering—the Thunderers. And Tamanund must hear my speech and read my heart. And the long roll of our Mohican dead must be recited—here and alone by me—the only one who has that right since Uncas died and the Mohican priesthood ended, save for the sagamores of the Magic Clan.

"Go, now, my brother. Go in peace."

The next instalment of *The Hidden Children* will appear in the February issue.



DRAWN BY PAUL JULIEN MEYLAN

For two years, Alice had longed to burgle the library. The moment had arrived at last!

(The Little Christmas Burglar)

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The Little Christmas Burglar

We take pleasure in presenting this newcomer to *Cosmopolitan's* pages. His work is little known in this country, but he has a high reputation in England for his exquisite delineation of child life. There are few authors who are so much in touch with the world in which little ones live, and have written of it with such true feeling and sympathy. But Mr Hamilton does not confine himself to stories about children. He writes charmingly about grown-ups, too, and we have more manuscripts of his for publication in the near future.

By Cosmo Hamilton

Illustrated by Paul Julien Meylan

MR. WICKHAM bent over the big Jacobean bed and looked down affectionately and admiringly at the curly golden head that lay upon the pillow. The eyes were shut, and the long lashes never so much as quivered. The tutor drew the bedclothes gently over the boy's shoulders, and said to himself: "Good; he's asleep. Now for a rubber or two with the vicar."

Before leaving the son and heir of Lord Lawleigh to his young dreams, Arthur Wickham saw that the night-light was burning well, glanced at the fire in the old hearth, which threw out intermittent flickers and lit up the great square room with its oak wainscoting and polished floor, and went away on tiptoe, turning up the collar of his overcoat. A white frost had laid its hoary fingers on everything and made all the bare branches of elm and oak glisten. It was a mile across the park to the rectory.

No sooner had the door shut than Master Alec, officially known as the Honorable Alexander Dysart Lovelace Lawleigh, a name much longer than himself, opened his blue eyes, looked round cautiously, sat up with a jerk, flung back the clothes, and scrambled out of bed.

The merest trifle taller than most boys of eleven, Alec, having thrust his arms into a thick scarlet dressing-gown and tied an inexpert knot round his waist with the blue cord, looked—much as he would resent the word—tiny. Perhaps this was because the dressing-gown reached his heels and made him something of a bundle.

Allowing himself only just one chuckle of delight and excitement, the boy—whose

entrance into the world had caused bells to ring and speeches to be made at a dinner of all the farmers and tenants on the Strome estate, and a man to go down on his knees at the bedside of a beautiful woman and say many things falteringly, which brought the sun back into her life—crept to the door. With his ear to the keyhole he listened keenly for many minutes. Then, adopting what he was quite certain was the reckless smile of a hardened criminal, he ran to a dark corner of the room, mounted a chair, touched the spring under the frame of a picture of the Stuart pretender, and climbed into the small, stuffy, cobwebbed aperture in which many a former Lawleigh had hidden in the old stirring days. Once there, he fumbled about eagerly until his hands touched a box. With this in his arms he stepped out, stood on the chair for a moment with dancing eyes, jumped down, and went quickly to the table. Out of the mysterious box came a mask, a pistol, a jimmy, a bunch of keys, a dark lantern, and an old black bag, on which had been painted the words, "Raffles, Junior."

You may have heard—it's amazing how things get about—that Alec Lawleigh's favorite game was playing at burglars; that several times he had broken into his mother's boudoir in Belgrave Square in the middle of the night, and carried off a nice selection of her jewels, and that, just as her ladyship was about to raise a hue and cry and send to Scotland Yard, a charming little note, signed "Raffles, Junior," had been handed to her, with a large cardboard box, in which it was stated that the notorious gentleman burglar

The Little Christmas Burglar

forgot that Lady Lawleigh was the most beautiful woman in the world, and so hastened to make reparation—or words to that effect, many of them most curiously spelled.

Naturally enough, this “notorious” person had stood more than once on the rug in front of the fireplace in his father’s study—a very solemn and serious matter—and a compromise was eventually arrived at. “If you *must* be a burglar, Alec; if you feel that you have an overwhelming call to that horrid occupation, take what you can, but put it back at once. If not, I shall absolutely forbid the game and deal very severely with you. Come now, is that a promise?”

“Yes, father.”

And so Alec continued to carry out ingenious and sometimes desperate exploits, at the end of each one of which he never failed to return all the booty to its place.

Now, the library at Strome Park was famous. Its reputation was European. For two generations, Lawleighs had made it a hobby and had spent large sums of money in adding to it first editions of every great work. Cases, filled with priceless examples of book-covers, stood everywhere, and on the shelves and stands there were something like ten thousand volumes, every one of which had a history and a price. Everything was under lock and key, and the key of the room itself was zealously kept by the housekeeper, to whom the butler delivered it every night at eleven o’clock. It was kept open until then, because Lord Lawleigh made a point of smoking a cigar there after dinner, and took great pride in conducting his friends through his treasures. It was to this room, and among those inestimable gems, that young Alec was going that night in his intermittently adopted character of Raffles, Junior.

It was Christmas Eve. Everything was in his favor. His father and mother were in Egypt. There was, therefore, to be no house-party that year. Alec and Mr. Wickham, the tutor, were to keep Christmas together and to give a dinner to the vicar, who was a bachelor; the doctor, who was a widower, and the land-agent, who had been jilted. The housekeeper and the butler were very busy arranging a large dinner of their own, and Alec guessed that the library would be forgotten. Here was a golden opportunity for a great *coup*.

Mr. Wickham had gone out. All the servants were in their quarters. For two years, Alec had longed to burgle the library. The moment had arrived at last!

Armed to the teeth with a pistol which had been carefully rendered useless, a small jimmy which was not much better than a toy, the bag out of which all books had to be taken at once, a bunch of keys, all rusty and old-fashioned, and a small electric lamp, which became, under the circumstances, a dark lantern, this very notorious and desperate blue-eyed, golden-headed little criminal, all of whose instincts were straight and honorable, crept down the great wide staircase. He told himself that he was on the greatest “job” of his fascinating career. As a matter of very plain fact, he was!

II

At the very moment when Alec had opened his blue eyes and sat up, a stealthy, quick-moving, nervous man, with shaking fingers, bloodless face, and listening, hungry eyes, had tried the library door, and almost fainted when he found that it opened to his touch. He had not broken into Strome Park by a window—he had heard of all the ingenious burglar-proof inventions. He had just hung about the stables, waited until the servants were all together in their large general room, and dodged into the house and through back passages to the main staircase. He, too, was for the library. He, too, carried a pistol, a jimmy, a bunch of keys, and a bag. They were, however, real.

Once inside the library, the burglar stood gazing about him, flicking his little stream of silver light here and there indecisively. Where was he to begin? Upon which of all these valuable things was he to lay his hands? He knew nothing about books. He was, however, utterly desperate. He intended to steal something—it didn’t matter what—which would be the means of filling his empty pockets. If disturbed or prevented—well, there was death for those who came, and, if necessary, for himself. That was the mood of this young, rather good-looking, thin, trembling, eager, shabby creature.

At last, pulling himself together, he made a series of quick movements. He went to the middle of the room, put his bag on one

of the cases, opened it, took out the revolver, cocked it, and placed it handy. Then, holding his lamp in his left hand, he made a dart at the nearest bookcase, opened it with a skeleton key, laid his hands on several glorious books, dropped them into his bag, and went back for more.

"You'd better let me hold the lamp, mate. You want both hands for this job."

Every drop of blood in the man's veins turned to water. He choked and gasped blasphemy, twisted round, seized his revolver, and aimed at the head of—

"My Gawd!" he whispered. The light of his lamp fell on the little face of a boy, whose great blue eyes were alight with excitement, and whose golden curls were all rough.

"I say," said Alec, "what a topping

revolver! It 'ud blow me into a hundred specks, wouldn't it?"

The man could find no voice. He did not even ask himself what he was to do. The friendship, the eager welcome in the boy's eyes flabbergasted, amazed him.

Alec laughed softly. "I'd marked this place out for myself," he said. "Had my eye on it for ever so long. However, you've got in first, so I vote we work together."

"Who are you?"

"Don't you know me?" asked the boy, tilting up his chin. "I expect that I'm an older hand than you are at this game, my lad. I'm Raffles, Junior."

The man looked stupidly at the small, well-shaped, outstretched hand. If this were a trick; if this child had been sent to hold his attention while one of the servants rang up the police—

The cold mouth of the revolver was pressed to the small forehead. If the boy shouted, the house of Lawleigh lost its heir, and the country a little son who might have died nobly in its service or lived to a ripe age to keep its best traditions bright.

"Nar then, own up, you little blighter. This is part of the plan to nab me. Go on, out with it, or as Gawd's in 'eaven I'll shoot!"

Alec never flinched. He raised his eyebrows slightly, and a look of contempt came into his face.

"My good sir," he said, "you don't seem to understand. I am Raffles, Junior, the prince of crib-crackers, the gentleman burglar. We are brothers,



The light of his lamp fell on the little face of a boy, whose great blue eyes were alight with excitement, and whose golden curls were all rough

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not enemies. You may put that pistol away."

The man's hand fell slowly, and a sort of sob came to his throat.

"That's right," said Alec. "Now then, mate, get to work. There's not much time to lose. The butler will examine the place soon to see that all's safe before he locks it up for the night. Finish with that case, will you? I'll set to work on another."

He bent down to undo his bag, and the real burglar saw the toy weapons laid out upon the floor. He rubbed his eyes and pinched himself. Surely all this was a curious dream, or else an ironical trick of Fate. The only thing for him to do was to clear out with what he had got. The presence of this boy, this curious child who spoke like a gentleman and looked like a little prince, unnerved him. Here was he, a man in very grim earnest, a hungry, out-of-luck, out-at-elbow, hollow-eyed, empty-hearted man, a burglar by necessity, brought up short by a boy with a face like a cherub, whose pajamas were silk, whose slippers were morocco, whose dressing-gown was of lamb's wool, playing at being a burglar. He made an irresolute, vague movement. He stumbled against the boy's toy jimmy. It rattled smartly against a cabinet.

"Look out," said Alec; "go easy. This place echoes like anything. All the rest of them would have the laugh on us if we were spotted! I say, lend me your key, will you? Somehow or other mine won't do the trick."

The key was handed.

"Oh, thanks. Awfully sporty of you. What a ripping thing! I opened it at once. Do you know what these books are worth? Hundreds. It's a mighty haul, mate, absolutely mighty. We shall be rich men—at least, we should if we hadn't got to put 'em all back. Hard luck, that, isn't it? You see, I promised father I would; otherwise there would have been no more raffling for me. Do you see? Are you turning it up, old boy?"

The man placed several books carefully in his bag and put the jimmy into his pocket.

"Yes, I've done," he said. "Now then, out of the way."

"But what are you going to do?"

"Do? Git, of course. What d'yer think I'm goin' to do? I'm not playin' games." The man shot out a sort of laugh.

Alec turned hot and cold. He realized all at once that he, the little mimic burglar, who had broken into the library for fun, was face to face with a real, live burglar, who had ignorantly helped himself to some of its most priceless gems, and was on the point of getting off with them. He realized that it was his duty to transform himself instantly, without a moment's hesitation, into the son of the master of the house; that playing was at an end. And, what *would* his father say if he played the coward as well as the burglar?

He made a dart forward, seized the man's revolver, leaped back with it, took up a position behind one of the cases, and aimed at the man's head.

"Move *one* step," he said, "and I fire."

The man, curiously enough, showed no sign of fear. The trembling anxiety, the furtive haste that was upon him when he slid into the room and while he was working on the bookcase, lifted. He stood looking down the muzzle of his own loaded revolver with a very bitter grin on his face, a grin of self-contempt. He eyed the golden-headed boy with a sort of admiration. He made no movement. He could see by the glance in his eyes that the boy would fire. Whether he missed or not, the loud report would give the alarm. He put his hands in his pockets and began to talk.

"My word," he said, half to himself, half to the boy, "you thought it was easy to be a criminal, didn't you? You thought you'd only got to break into a swagger house and help yerself and git, didn't yer? Others have done it when drove to it. And when you *did* get in and 'ad 'elped yerself, you are bluffed off yer perch by a kid, a little tiny bit of a boy. 'Earty congrats. You've beat me. You'll find it pretty useful when you grow up to be able to lie with the face of an angel. *Playin'* at burglars, was you? Oh, fine! A proper bit of bluff, that, 'pon my soul. I was your 'mate; I was 'old boy.' A nice dirty little trickster, you, if ever I met one."

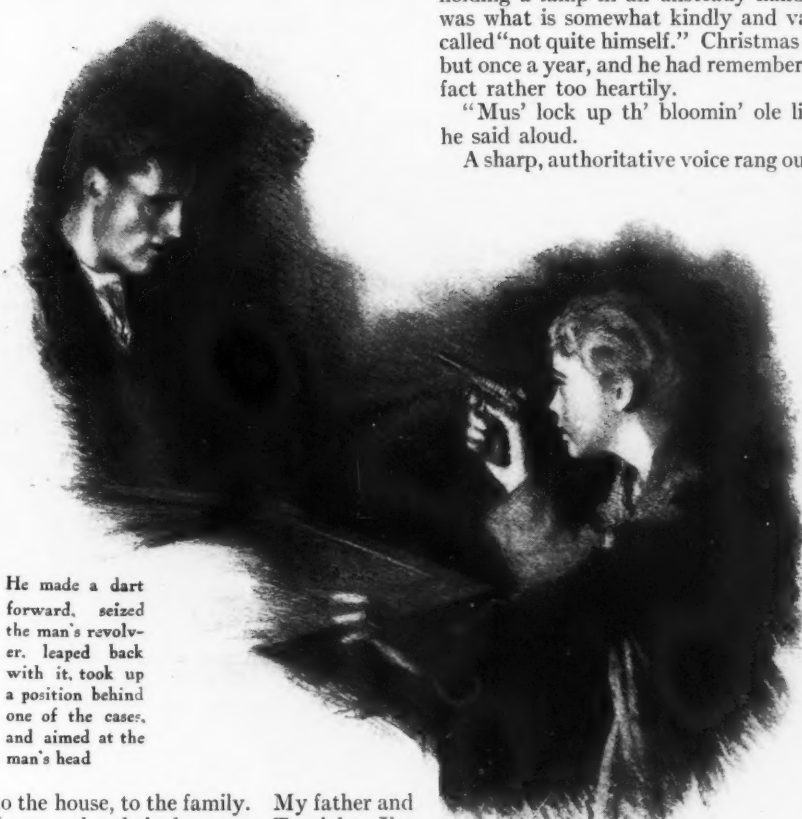
Alec's lips began to tremble, and his eyes to fill with tears.

"I can't help your saying these things," he said, when he found words. "In a way, you have the right. They hurt badly. If I'd thought that playing at burglars would have led to this, I should have chucked it years ago. These books are not my father's and they're not mine. They belong

holding a lamp in an unsteady hand. He was what is somewhat kindly and vaguely called "not quite himself." Christmas comes but once a year, and he had remembered the fact rather too heartily.

"Mus' lock up th' bloomin' ole libr'y," he said aloud.

A sharp, authoritative voice rang out. It



He made a dart forward, seized the man's revolver, leaped back with it, took up a position behind one of the cases, and aimed at the man's head

to the house, to the family. My father and I are only their keepers. To-night, I'm responsible. I'm sorry you don't believe me. You know how you came here. Please go."

The man's voice changed queerly.

"You—you let me off, then?"

"Yes, mate."

The man seized his cap, rammed it on his head, left his tools and his bag where he had left them, and turned toward the door.

Heavy steps came along the passage, and under the door appeared a gleam of light.

"Oh, my Gawd, what am I to do, what am I to do?"

As quickly as he could, Alec uncocked the revolver, dropped it in the terrified man's bag, pushed it with his tools under a large settee, and shut the case.

"Get under the sofa, quick," he whispered. "I often hide there. Don't breathe!"

The burglar was only just in time. The door was flung open, and the butler entered,

sounded so like his lordship's that Griggs stiffened and clapped his heels together.

"Griggs, you're drunk. You will give me the key of this room. I will see that it is all right, and give it to the housekeeper myself." The boy stood as his father always stood—legs apart, hands in pocket, chin held high.

Griggs giggled a little.

"Bless me," he said, "if it isn't Marst' Alec!"

Alec walked slowly into the circle of light, so that the tipsy man could see his face.

He then eyed him sternly. (How Lord Lawleigh would have laughed if he had seen the excellence of the imitation!)

"Did you hear what I said, Griggs?"

The Little Christmas Burglar

"But the lib'ry ish very pert-ikler job, I—"

The boy stamped his foot.

Griggs delivered up the key. "I know I've been keepin' Christmas—"

"It's clear to anyone. However, nothing shall be said. Get to bed.

Stupid tears came into the usually admirable man's voice.

"I'm sure I'm very, very, much 'bliged, Marst' Alec—"

"That's all right, Griggs. Christmas, eh? Good-night. Get along. Have no anxiety about the key."

"No—no. Gor blesh yer, Marst' Alec."

With comic dignity the butler returned to the door, and went away—never thinking that the young master would be without a light, or asking why he was out of bed at that hour of the night.

The moment the door was closed the man crawled out.

"Wait a minute," whispered Alec. "You must let him go first. Just tell me this: What's it mean to you to waste a night's work?"

"A wife and family without a bite or scrap on Christmas day. That's all."

"All!"

Alec bit his lip. *He* had only played at burglars. "What are you going to do?" he asked.

"Nothing but save my skin."

The man came out and stood up in front of the boy. There was something indescribably pitiful in his attitude, something almost horrible in the cynicism of his expression.

"I'm one of the superfluous," he said. "Board-school educated, which means taught to look down on honest trade, and aim for a black coat and white shirt. Boy clerk, first, on a few shillings a week, then a man clerk on a few more. Fall in love and marry her, be honest and respectable. Wife and I pinch through life together—very 'appy for all that. Children come—three—three too many for my shillings—and make us all the 'appier. No grumbles—go on pinchin', glad enough to do it. Then the firm goes under—foreign competition. Good character and kind words. Depression? Why? An honest man, workin' steady in one shop for eighteen years, only just thirty. Get another job easy enough—p'raps!"

The man stopped and gulped.

Alec stretched forward and put his hand

on the man's arm. "Couldn't you?" he asked, eagerly.

The boy's touch humanized the man, who had been stung into bitterness.

"No, Master Alec," he said simply. "Me and Jinny had put by a bit for the rainy day, and got some nice bits about us. We was what's called highly respectable people. But while I found 'ow 'ard the pavement can be, trampin', trampin', the savings went, and our little bits followed. Out of the 'ouse and into two rooms, and all the time trampin'. No clerks wanted, nowhere. Take to street jobs, but get beat at 'em by old 'ands. And then one room, and the wife and kids 'ungrier and shabbier—"

"Oh, mate!" whispered Alec.

"Then it came to trying dishonesty, Master Alec. Always before me and Jinny had kep' Christmas in the good old way, and things had been found in stockings. God! I couldn't face those eyes with nothin'; I couldn't. I'd borrowed enough from my brother to leave money with the wife to last a week and to buy a ticket darn 'ere, where I 'eard of a job goin'. Get 'ere, and they tell me I'm not respectable enough, and that settled it. Ask about this 'ouse and 'ear of the library. What's four or five books to them as 'as meat and drink and clothes and roof? Eh? It's—"

Alec sprang up. "If those books were mine, I'd give them to you. They're not. They're my son's and his son's. But wait a second. Don't move, or you'll get spotted."

The man found himself alone. His first attempt at dishonesty had placed him in a worse position than ever. He dared not move.

Within arm's length lay valuable books which, after all, were useless, and a revolver, which might as well be a toy.

Alec came back, panting. He carried a money-box, which rattled as he moved. His face was flushed, and his cheeks were not quite dry. He put the little iron box on the floor.

"The jimmy," he said. "Quick! This is my last bit of burgling. I'm going to break open something of my own."

The man handed it, dully, and watched the boy force the box open. It contained twenty-six sovereigns, one half-sovereign, three half-crowns.

Jinny's man drew in his breath at the



The door was flung open, and the butler entered,
holding a lamp in an unsteady hand

sight, and shut his eyes. It seemed to him to be the epitome of cruelty to flash such things under his nose, when even one of these would feed his wife and children for many days and keep himself from suicide. He opened his eyes to see the boy tying the whole of the money up in a handkerchief, a white silk handkerchief with a large L worked on one of the corners.

"Mate," he said, looking up at the wondering man with his large blue eyes, "I'll make you a promise if you will make me one."

"What, Master Alec?"

"Don't burgle again, and I won't."

The man nodded and gave a helpless sort of gesture.

"Father will be here on New Year's eve," continued Alec, eagerly, "because

it's my birthday. For my present I shall ask him to put you in the agent's office to do the books. Write your name and address on this." He held out a small pocket-book. The man's hand shook.

"Meanwhile"—the boy glanced anxiously at the door—"please, may I give a little Christmas present to your wife?" He held out the money.

When, two minutes later, Alec shut the window, having watched slip away the man who couldn't speak, but who had nearly broken his fingers, he put the books back, shut the case, hid the two bags under the sofa, locked the library door, and marched with the key to the housekeeper's room.

The good woman was not there, so he put it in the drawer in which he knew that it was kept, and went up-stairs to bed.

An American Actress of Title

By Alan Dale



LADY JOHN-STON FORBES-ROBERTSON is such an awfully "classy" thing in names that it is hard to realize that it belongs to an actress—and to an American actress, at that. It is the sort of name that awakens all the latent snobishness in the well-trained Anglo-maniacal mind. One thinks of it in connection with flunkys, and pink teas, and swagger society-lists of "among those present," and gay doings at remote country houses—to say nothing of arch-romances in the *Family Herald*. Yet it is a true title, and it belongs to little Miss Gertrude Elliott, an unassuming American girl.

Henceforth, in the lists of titled American girls that the daily papers gloat over, will be included that of Miss Gertrude Elliott, wife of Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson. And if I am not mistaken, Miss Elliott is the first American actress to own a title. If I am mistaken, let nobody worry about contradicting me, as the gaiety of nations will not be concerned with the statement.

Years ago I always used to regard Miss Gertrude Elliott as a sort of preparation for her charming sister, Maxine. When they were in the same cast, as occasionally happened, Miss Gertrude used

to come on looking exceedingly pretty, only to be snuffed out by the later advent of her dazzling sister. In fact, the one sister was just a dim suggestion of the other. Gertrude looked like the undeveloped film of Maxine. I have heard her applauded by an audience who believed that she was Maxine. That was long ago. Although Miss Gertrude married a very popular and even famous English actor, she did not forego any ambitions that she may have owned. One cannot help admiring the steady and persistent manner in which she sought to forge ahead in the thorny way of the drama. She could have afforded to take life easily, to bask in the reflected glory of that sterling and delightful actor, Forbes-Robertson; she could have retired grace-

Lady Forbes-Robertson (Miss Gertrude Elliott) as Ophelia, in *Hamlet*. After a long and arduous apprenticeship to the stage, she has beaten her beautiful sister, Maxine, in the histrionic race

fully, as many women would undoubtedly have done. But little Miss Elliott was made of

sterner stuff, and at the very time that she could have lolled luxuriously in London's lazy langour, she elected to tackle the uneasy road to the stellar firmament.

Don't imagine for one moment that Lady Johnston Forbes-Robertson hasn't served a long and arduous apprenticeship to the stage, for indeed she has. She has not reached her present position without hard work. She is assuredly a very pretty woman, but she has worked as assiduously as though personal charm were entirely eliminated from the struggle. It is, in fact, at least nineteen years since Miss Gertrude Elliott first was seen on the American stage. Then she played a part with Miss Rose Coghlan in "A Woman of No Importance," and I don't believe that anybody foresaw a future for her. Steady work for nineteen years, in any walk of life, means a great deal. It cuts out the butterfly idea completely and gets down to genuine effort.

Miss Elliott played a number of small parts, but really attracted very little attention until she appeared with Nat Goodwin and Maxine Elliott in their interesting series of plays. Three plays



The first American actress to own a title

in particular gave her a certain prominence. They were "An American Citizen," "Nathan Hale," and "The Cowboy and the Lady." It was in the last-named piece that she made her first appearance in London, at the Duke of York's



Miss Elliott as Portia, and as Cleopatra in Shaw's "Caesar and Cleopatra"

Theater. The poor little play did not live a happy life; it was snuffed out, but Miss Gertrude Elliott

An American Actress of Title

survived and prospered. She was not emphatically luminous, but she had a certain charm, a sedate, demure, and repressed appeal that was bound to be of service to her later on.

Those who like stage romance—there is mighty little of it, so that it is good to like it occasionally—will be interested to know that she was en-

women elect to play—prettily, a very different result might have been achieved. Forbes-Robertson could not have failed to realize that here was a little woman who was not afraid of work, and one capable of being molded most plastically.

In his recent speech at the opening of the new Shubert Theater, New York, the actor thanked America for his wife. It was a very graceful thing to do. Lady Robertson may, without "mutual admiration," thank England for her husband. Don't you think so?

Quite recently, Miss Elliott tried to star all by her lonelies. I think that she might have succeeded if she had not made an unfortunate choice of plays. But, as an actress, she had arrived, and had beaten her beautiful sister Maxine in the histrionic race.

Miss Elliott has intelligence, a sense of humor, and considerable personal charm. She is really equipped for the fray at the very time that her husband is re-

In the many rôles she has undertaken, has always

Miss Elliott shown intelligence, a sense of humor, and considerable personal charm

gaged by Forbes-Robertson in September, 1900, and went on tour with that actor—"on tour" being English for "on the road." She played in "Hamlet" and "The Devil's Disciple," and was still working just as hard as ever. Remember that, ye stage-struck gells, dazzled by prominence without realizing the struggle that precedes it. If Miss Gertrude Elliott had fainted by the wayside, or had played the pretty little rôles that pretty little

tiring from the stage to enjoy his well-earned leisure. She has won laurels; she should be permitted to rest on them, too, if she prefers to do so.



Bonnie Christie MacDonald

CHRISTIE MACDONALD, who has been lucky enough to have two "princess" rôles, one right after the other, in "The Spring Maid" and "Sweet-the heather, hearts", is as Scottish as although born in Nova Scotia. Her mother, a Mackenzie, to answer for to all Presbyterians family, in ting her to be

Miss Mac-Donald in her latest success, "Sweethearts"



PHOTO-GRAPH BY RANG

She has never been in anything but light opera, but has had good, live rôles, such as in "The Spring Maid," "The Toreador," and "The Mikado"

a play-actress. To-day, this wayward daughter's occasional Sabbath breaking is only mitigated, at home, by the fact that it consists in golf playing (she is a tournament champion), and that Christie always attends service at the kirk before the game.

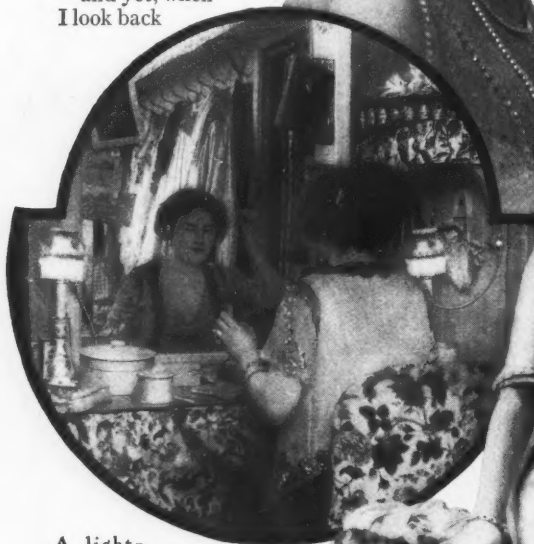


"I have never been in anything but light opera," says Miss MacDonald, in accounting for herself, "but I have come through a wide and varied experience in that. In 'Erminie,' 'The Mikado' and other Gilbert - and - Sullivan standards, 'The Toreador,' 'Miss Hook of Holland,' and a whole list of live ones, good

rôles have come my way, though for a long while not leads, except when I occasionally struck one as understudy. All the time I was studying—vocal lessons, dancing, French—to say nothing of the things I had to studiously avoid, such as late suppers, joy-rides, and whatever of pleasant and human that is supposed to mar the simple life of the climber in this arduous profession. My progress was scarcely visible as I went along—and yet, when I look back

among your possibilities?"

"No—just opera, as it comes, grand or petty. To me, it is all in the one career, and as yet I am only beginning to get into the possibilities of real light opera. My policy is to keep going ahead in a straight line, and not lose any time in divergences or experiments. When I was studying in Paris, a few seasons back, the tempting offer was made me to take the title-rôle of 'The Merry Widow,' in the French version. I'm glad now I had sufficient strength of purpose to decline it, for, though I might perhaps have done creditably enough, still I felt that my logical career was not that of another Mary Gar-



A light-opera star "making up" in her dressing-room

now, I can see that every hour of real work or sacrifice I put in then, counted as a life-saver when opportunity came with a rush and was likely to swamp me. Why, when I realized that I had made an individual hit singing 'Day Dreams,' in 'The Spring Maid,' I forgot I had ever been otherwise than a spoiled child of fortune, and threw a kiss to my name on an electric sign away up among the stars."

"Do you see grand opera looming

The secret of her success is that she has stuck to light opera, has kept going ahead in a straight line, and has not lost any time in divergences or experiments

den. But I am looking forward to an opportunity in a modern lyric piece."



A Picture- Play Ingénue

HER name is Muriel Ostriche—pronounced just like that of the big plume-bearing bird. She is an *ingénue*, and a bright particular star in a line of dramatic portrayal that five years ago practically did not exist. Brief as is the time indicated, this young lady's professional career is briefer by

half. Three years ago Muriel was a schoolgirl, and to-day she is barely eighteen; yet she has already created and played a greater number of parts than many a mature actress in a fully rounded-out career.

In a recent voting contest to establish the relative popularity of motion-picture favorites, the name of Muriel Ostriche stood second only to that of Alice Joyce.

Beauty, of both face and figure, is undoubtedly the chief factor, thus far, in Miss Ostriche's phenomenal success. Yet this does not imply any dispraise of her intelligence and artistic ability, since personal beauty is only the raw material upon which talent builds in acting for the photo-play film.

She is petite, rather blonde



This star of the "movies" is a typical New York girl



EXCLUSIVE
PHOTOGRAPH
BY WHITE

Beauty, of both face and figure, is undoubtedly the chief factor, thus far, in Miss Ostriche's phenomenal success

than dark, with hair hanging in luxuriant curls, the large eager eyes of a child, and a certain vivid vivacity of facial expression ple somewhat vaguely call

"But I am neither French nor Austrian," Miss Ostriche declares; "just a New York girl, who is finishing her high-school course in the motion-picture studios because she has a natural liking for the work. It is exciting and pleasant and profitable, besides being a wonderful education."



that people
'French.'

A Picture-Play Ingénue

She is right about the excitement, anyway. The interviewer arrived at the Thanhouser film-foundry in New Rochelle, just in time to see the little heroine whirled away down the Pelham pike in a crazy, cavorting automobile that made even the heaviest motor-trucks steer out of their course. It transpired that "Algy's Awful Auto" was the picture-farce in course of visualization. Giving chase in another machine, we finally caught the eloping party at a

guy looks it over, and says, "Tain't worth it, but I'll give you the tickets." Then, when the next train comes along, you both get aboard. You can go through the car, and jump off at the rear end before the train starts."

This scene having been duly enacted and registered on five hundred feet or so of film, Miss Ostriche was at liberty for a chat.

"This is nothing com-

EXCLUSIVE
PHOTOGRAPHS
BY WHITE



She is petite, rather blonde than dark, with hair hanging in luxuriant curls

country railway station, half a dozen miles distant. They already had the camera in position, and the "stage" director was saying to Miss Ostriche:

"Now, while Algy is trying to get the magneto to work, you exclaim, 'I have an idea!' and run to the station and call the ticket-seller out. Algy says to him, 'Gimme two tickets for this automobile?' The



Although barely eighteen.

Miss Ostriche has created and played a greater number of parts than many a mature actress in a fully rounded-out career

pared to some things I've had to do," she tells us. "For instance, I had to be put in a coffin and buried alive, in the picture version of one of the Edgar Allan Poe tales. In another, there was a real, live tiger prowling under my bed. But I think only of the development of the play—and my pictures come out all right."



The Air-Pirate

You don't have to read dry scientific journals to keep in touch with the marvelous twentieth-century progress of inventions and discovery—you find it recorded in these Craig Kennedy stories. Jules Verne never dreamed of some of the feats that Kennedy performs with his modern apparatus and methods. And yet everything he does is possible and practical—based on the very latest scientific developments throughout the world. In this story, his detective skill is called upon to solve a mystery that is terrorizing a fashionable summer colony.

By Arthur B. Reeve

Author of "The Bomb-Maker," "The Ghouls," and other Craig Kennedy stories

Illustrated by Will Foster

"CAN you arrange to spend the week-end with me at the Stuyvesant Verplancks' at Bluffwood?" asked Kennedy, over the telephone one afternoon, as I was just completing my work on the *Star*.

"How long since society took you up?" I asked airily, adding, "Is it a large house-party you're getting up?"

"You have heard of the so-called 'phantom bandit' of Bluffwood, haven't you?" he returned rather brusquely, as though there were no time now for bantering.

I confess that I had forgotten it, but now I recalled that, for several days, I had been reading little paragraphs about robberies of the big estates on the Long Island shore of the Sound. One of the newspaper correspondents had called the robber a "phantom bandit," but I had thought it nothing more than an attempt to make good copy out of a rather ordinary occurrence.

"Well," he hurried on, "that's the reason why I have been 'taken up by society,' as you so elegantly phrase it. From the secret hiding-places of the boudoirs and safes of fashionable women at Bluffwood, thousands of dollars' worth of jewels and other trinkets have mysteriously vanished. Of course you'll come along. Why, it will be just the story to tone up that alleged page of society news you hand out in the Sunday *Star*. There—we're quits, now. Seriously, though, Walter, it really seems to be a very baffling case, or rather series of cases. The whole colony out there is terrorized. They don't

know who the robber is, or how he operates, or who will be the next victim, but his skill and success seem almost uncanny. Mr. Verplanck has put one of his cars at my disposal, and I'm up here at the laboratory gathering some apparatus that may be useful. I'll pick you up anywhere between this and the Bridge—how about Columbus Circle in half an hour?"

"Good," I agreed, deciding quickly from his tone and manner of assurance that it would be a case I could not afford to miss.

The Stuyvesant Verplancks, I knew, were among the leaders of the rather *recherchée* society at Bluffwood, and the pace at which Bluffwood moved and had its being was such as to guarantee a good story in one way or another.

"Why," remarked Kennedy, as we sped out over the picturesque roads of the north shore of Long Island, "this fellow, or fellows, seems to have taken the measure of all the wealthy members of the exclusive organizations out there—the Westport Yacht Club, the Bluffwood Country Club, the North Shore Hunt, and all of them. It's a positive scandal—the ease with which he seems to come and go without detection, striking now here, now there, often at places that it seems physically impossible to get at, and yet always with the same diabolical skill and success. One night he will take some baubles worth thousands; the next, pass them by for something apparently of no value at all, a piece of bric-à-brac, a bundle of letters, anything."

"Seems purposeless, insane, doesn't it?" I put in.

"Not when he always takes something—often more valuable than money," returned Craig. He leaned back in the car and surveyed the glimpses of bay and countryside as we were whisked by the breaks in the trees.

"Walter," he remarked meditatively, "have you ever considered the possibilities of blackmail if the right sort of evidence were obtained under this new 'white-slave' act? Scandals that some of the fast set may be inclined to wink at, that, at worst, used to end in Reno, become felonies, with federal-prison sentences looming up in the background. Think it over."

Stuyvesant Verplanck had telephoned rather hurriedly to Craig earlier in the day, retaining his services, but telling in the briefest way only of the extent of the depredations, and hinting that more than jewelry might be at stake.

It was a pleasant ride, but we finished it in silence. Verplanck was, as I recalled, a large, masterful man, one of those who demanded and liked large things—such as the estate of several hundred acres which we at last entered.

It was on a neck of land with the restless waters of the Sound on one side and the calmer waters of the bay on the other. Westport Bay lay in a beautifully wooded, hilly country, and the house itself was on an elevation, with a huge sweep of terraced lawn before it down to the water's edge.

As we pulled up under the broad stone porte-cochère, Verplanck, who had been expecting us, led the way into his library, a great room, literally crowded with curios and objects of art which he had collected on his travels.

"You will recall," began Verplanck, wasting no time over preliminaries, but plunging directly into the subject, "that the prominent robberies of late have been at sea-coast resorts, especially on the shores of Long Island Sound within, say, a hundred miles of New York. There has been a great deal of talk about dark and muffled automobiles that have conveyed mysterious parties swiftly and silently across country.

"My theory," he went on self-assertively, "is that the attack has been made always along water routes. Under shadow of darkness, it is easy to slip into one of the sheltered coves or miniature fiords with

which the north coast of the island abounds, and land a cutthroat crew primed with exact information of the treasure on some of these estates. Once the booty is secured, the criminal could put out again into the Sound without leaving a clue."

He seemed to be considering his theory. "Perhaps the robberies last summer at Narragansett, Newport, and a dozen other New England places were perpetrated by the same cracksmen. I believe," he concluded, lowering his voice, "that there plies to-day on the wide waters of the Sound a slim, swift motor-boat which wears the air of a pleasure craft, yet is as black a pirate as ever flew the Jolly Roger. She may at this moment be anchored off some exclusive yacht club, flying the respectable burgee of the club—who knows?"

He paused as if his deductions settled the case so far. He would have resumed in the same vein if the door had not opened. A lady in a cobwebby gown entered the room. She was of middle age, but had retained her youth with a skill that her sisters of less leisure always envy. Evidently she had not expected to find anyone, yet nothing seemed to disconcert her.

"Mrs. Verplanck," her husband introduced. "Professor Kennedy and his associate, Mr. Jameson—the detectives we have heard about. We were discussing the robberies."

"Oh, yes," she said, smiling, "my husband has been thinking of forming himself into a vigilance committee. The local authorities are all at sea."

"You have not been robbed yourself?" queried Craig tentatively.

"Indeed we have," exclaimed Verplanck quickly. "The other night I was awakened by the noise of some one down here in this very library. I fired a shot, wild, and shouted, but before I could get down here, the intruder had fled through a window. Mrs. Verplanck was awakened by the rumpus, and both of us heard a peculiar whirring noise.

"Like an automobile muffled down," she put in.

"No," he asserted vigorously, "more like a powerful motor-boat, one with the exhaust under water."

"Did the intruder get anything?" asked Kennedy.

"That's the lucky part. He had just opened this safe, apparently, and begun to



DRAWN BY WILL PORTER

"I thought I saw a moving light for an instant across the bay. Is there a road over there, above the Carter house?" he asked suddenly

ransack it. This is my private safe. Mrs. Verplanck has another built into her own room up-stairs where she keeps her jewels."

"It is not a very modern safe, is it?" ventured Kennedy. "The fellow ripped off the outer casing with what they call a 'can-opener.'"

"No. I keep it against fire rather than burglars. But he overlooked a box of valuable heirlooms, some silver with the Verplanck arms. I think I must have scared him off just in time. He seized a package in the safe, but it was only some business correspondence. I don't relish having it lost, particularly. It related to a gentleman's agreement a number of us had in the recent cotton-corner. I suppose the government would like to have it. But—here's the point: If it is so easy to get in and get away, no one in Bluffwood is safe."

"Why, they robbed the Montgomery Carter place the other night," remarked Mrs. Verplanck, "and almost got a lot of old Mrs. Carter's jewels as well as stuff belonging to her son, Montgomery, Junior. That was the first robbery. Mr. Carter, that is, Junior—'Monty,' everyone calls him—and his chauffeur almost captured the fellow, but he managed to escape into the woods."

"Oh, no one is safe any more," reiterated Verplanck. "Carter seems to be the only one who has had a real chance at him, and he was able to get away neatly."

"But he's not the only one who got off without a loss," Mrs. Verplanck put in. "The last visit——" Then she paused.

"Where was the last attempt?" asked Kennedy.

"At the house of Mrs. Hollingsworth—around the point on this side of the bay. You can't see it from here."

"I'd like to go there," remarked Kennedy.

"Very well. Car or boat?"

"Boat, I think."

"Suppose we go in my little runabout, the Streamline II? She's as fast as any ordinary automobile."

"Very good. Then we can get an idea of the harbor."

"I'll telephone first that we are coming," said Verplanck.

"I think I'll go, too," considered Mrs. Verplanck, ringing for a heavy wrap.

"Just as you please," said Verplanck.

The Streamline was a three-stepped boat which Verplanck had built for racing, a

beautiful craft, managed much like a racing automobile. As she started from the dock, the purring drone of her eight cylinders sent her feathering over the waves like a skipping-stone. She sank back into the water, her bow leaping upward, a cloud of spray in her wake, like a waterspout.

The Hollingsworth house was a beautiful little place down the bay from the yacht club but not as far as Verplanck's or the Carter estate, which was opposite.

Mrs. Hollingsworth was a wealthy *divorcée*, living rather quietly with her two children, of whom the courts had awarded her the care. She was a striking woman. I gathered, however, that she was not on very good terms with the little Westport clique in which the Verplancks moved, or, at least, not with Mrs. Verplanck. The two women seemed to regard each other rather coldly, I thought, although Mr. Verplanck, manlike, seemed to scorn any distinctions and was more than cordial. I wondered why Mrs. Verplanck had come.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Hollingsworth, when the reason for our visit had been explained, "the attempt was a failure. I happened to be awake, rather late, or perhaps you would call it early. I thought I heard a noise as if some one was trying to break into the drawing-room through the window. I switched on all the lights. I have them arranged so, for just that purpose of scaring off intruders. Then, as I looked out of my window on the second floor, I fancied I could see a dark figure sink into the shadow of the shrubbery at the side of the house. Then there was a whirl. It might have been an automobile, although it sounded differently from that—more like a motor-boat. At any rate, there was no trace of a car that we could discover in the morning. The road had been oiled, too, and a car would have left marks. And yet some one was here. There were marks on the drawing-room window, just where I heard the sounds."

Who could it be? I asked myself, as we left. I knew that the great army of chauffeurs was infested with thieves, thugs, and gunmen. Then, too, there were maids, always useful as scouts for these corsairs who prey on the rich. Yet so adroitly had everything been done in these cases, that not a clue seemed to have been left behind.

We returned to Verplanck's in the Streamline in record time, dined, and then found McNeill, a local detective, waiting to supply

his quota of information. McNeill was of the square-toed, double-chinned, bull-necked variety, just the man to take along if there was to be any fighting. He had, however, very little to add to the solution of the mystery, apparently believing in the chauffeur-and-maid theory.

It was too late to do anything more that night, and we sat on the Verplanck's porch, overlooking the beautiful harbor. It was a black, inky night, with no moon—one of those nights when the myriad lights on the boats were mere points in the darkness. As we looked out over the water, considering the case which, as yet, we had scarcely started on, Kennedy seemed engrossed in the study in black.

"I thought I saw a moving light for an instant across the bay, above the boats, and as though it were in the darkness of the hills on the other side. Is there a road over there, above the Carter house?" he asked suddenly.

"There is a road part of the way on the crest of the hill," replied Mrs. Verplanck. "You can see a car on it, now and then, through the trees, like a moving light."

"Over there, I mean," reiterated Kennedy, indicating the light as it flashed now faintly, then disappeared, to reappear farther along, like a gigantic firefly.

"N-no," said Verplanck. "I don't think the road runs down so far as that. It is farther up the bay."

"What is it, then?" asked Kennedy, half to himself. "It seems to be traveling rapidly. There—it has gone!"

We continued to watch for several minutes, but it did not reappear. Could it have been a light on the mast of a boat moving rapidly up the bay and perhaps nearer to us than we suspected? Nothing further happened, however, and we retired early, expecting to start with fresh minds on the case in the morning. Several watchmen whom Verplanck employed, both on the shore and along the driveways, were left guarding every possible entrance to the estate.

Yet the next morning, as we met in the cheery east breakfast-room, Verplanck's gardener came in, hat in hand, with much suppressed excitement.

In his hand he held an orange which he had found in the shrubbery beneath the windows of the house. In it was stuck a long nail and to the nail was fastened a tag.

Kennedy read it quickly.

If this had been a bomb, you and your detectives would never have known what struck you.

AQUAERO.

"Good Gad, man!" exclaimed Verplanck, who had read the words over Craig's shoulder. "What do you make of *that*?"

Kennedy merely shook his head. Mrs. Verplanck was the calmest of all.

"The light!" I cried. "You remember the light? Could it have been a signal to some one on this side of the bay, a signal-light in the woods?"

"Possibly," commented Kennedy, absently, adding: "Robbery with this fellow seems to be an art as carefully strategized as a promoter's plan or a merchant's trade-campaign. I think I'll run over this morning and see if there is trace of anything on the Carter estate."

Just then the telephone-bell rang insistently. It was McNeill, much excited, though he had not heard of the orange incident. Verplanck answered the call.

"Have you heard the news?" asked McNeill. "That fellow must have turned up last night at Belle Aire."

"Belle Aire? Why, man, that's fifty miles away and on the other side of the island. He was here last night," and Verplanck related briefly the find of the morning. "No boat could get around the island in that time, and, as for a car, those roads are almost impassable at night."

"Can't help it," returned McNeill doggedly. "The Halstead estate at Belle Aire was robbed last night. It's spooky, all right."

"Tell McNeill I want to see him—will meet him in the village directly," cut in Craig, before Verplanck had finished.

We bolted a hasty breakfast, and in one of the Verplanck cars hurried to meet McNeill.

"What do you intend doing?" he asked helplessly, as Kennedy finished his recital of the queer doings of the night before.

"I'm going out now to look around the Carter place. Can you come along?"

"Surely," agreed McNeill, climbing into the car. "You know him?"

"No."

"Then I'll introduce you. Queer chap, Carter. He's a lawyer, although I don't think he has much practise except managing his mother's estate."

McNeill settled back in the luxurious car with an exclamation of satisfaction.

"What do you think of Verplanck?" he asked.

"He seems to me to be a very public-spirited man," answered Kennedy discreetly.

That, however, was not what McNeill meant, and he ignored it. And so, for the next ten minutes, we were entertained with a little retail scandal of Westport and Bluffwood, including a tale that seemed to have gained currency that Verplanck and Mrs. Hollingsworth were too friendly to please Mrs. Verplanck. I set the whole thing down to the hostility and jealousy of the townspeople, who misinterpret everything possible in the smart set, although I could not help recalling how quickly she had spoken when we had visited the Hollingsworth house in the Streamline the day before.

Montgomery Carter happened to be at home and, at least openly, interposed no objection to our going about the grounds.

"You see," explained Kennedy, watching the effect of his words as if to note whether Carter himself had noticed anything unusual the night before, "we saw a light moving over here last night. To tell the truth, I half expected you would have a story to add to ours, of a second visit."

Carter smiled. "No objection at all. I'm simply nonplused at the nerve of this fellow coming back again. I guess you've heard what a narrow squeak he had with me. You're welcome to go anywhere, just so long as you don't disturb my study down there in the boat-house. I use that because it overlooks the bay—just the place to study over knotty legal problems."

Back of, or in front of the Carter house, according as you fancied it faced the bay or not, was the boat-house, built by Carter's father, who had been a great yachtsman in his day and commodore of the club. His son had not gone in much for water sports and had converted the corner underneath a sort of observation tower into a law office.

"There has always seemed to me to be something strange about that boat-house since the old man died," remarked McNeill, in a half-whisper, as we left Carter. "He always keeps it locked and never lets anyone go in there."

Kennedy had been climbing the hill back

of the house and now paused to look about. Below was the Carter garage.

"By the way," exclaimed McNeill, as if he had at last hit on a great discovery, "Carter has a new chauffeur, a fellow named Wickham. I just saw him driving down to the village. He's a chap that it might pay us to watch—a newcomer, smart as a steel trap, they say, but not much of talker."

"Suppose you take that job—watch him," encouraged Kennedy. "We can't know too much about strangers here, McNeill."

"That's right," agreed the detective; "I'll get a line on him."

"Don't be easily discouraged," added Kennedy, as McNeill started down the hill to the garage. "If he is a fox, he'll try to throw you off the trail. Hang on."

"What was that for?" I asked, as the detective disappeared. "Did you want to get rid of him?"

"Partly," replied Craig, descending slowly, after a long survey of the surrounding country. We had reached the garage, deserted now, except for our own car.

"I'd like to investigate that tower," remarked Kennedy, with a keen look at me, "if it could be done without seeming to violate Mr. Carter's hospitality."

"Well," I observed, my eye catching a ladder beside the garage, "there's a ladder."

He walked over to the automobile, took a little package out, slipped it into his pocket, and a few minutes later we had set the ladder up against the side of the boat-house farthest away from the house. It was the work of only a moment for Kennedy to scale it and prowl across the roof to the tower, while I stood guard at the foot.

"No one has been up there recently," he panted breathlessly, as he rejoined me. "There isn't a sign."

We took the ladder quietly back to the garage; then Kennedy led the way down the shore to a sort of little summer house, cut off from the boat-house and garage by the trees, though over the top of a hedge one could still see the boat-house tower.

We sat down, and Craig filled his lungs with the good salt air.

"Walter," he said, at length, "I wish you'd take the car and go around to Verplanck's. I don't think you can see the tower through the trees, but I should like to be sure."

I found that it could not be seen, though



"Good Gad, man!" exclaimed Verplanck, who had read the words over Craig's shoulder. "What do you make of that?"

I tried all over the place and got myself disliked by the gardener and suspected by a watchman with a dog.

It could not have been on the tower of the boat-house that we had seen the light, and I hurried back to Craig to tell him so. But when I returned, I found that he was impatiently pacing the little rustic summer

house, no longer interested in what he had sent me to find out.

"What has happened?" I asked eagerly.

"Just come out here and I'll show you something," he replied, leaving the summer-house and approaching the boat-house from the other side of the hedge, on the beach, so that the house itself cut us off from observation at Carter's.

"I fixed a lens on the top of that tower when I was up there," he explained, pointing up at it. "It must be about fifty feet high. From there, you see, it throws a reflection down to this mirror. I did it because, through a skylight in the tower, I could read whatever was written by anyone sitting at Carter's desk in the corner under it."

"Read?" I repeated, mystified.

"Yes, by invisible light," he continued. "This invisible-light business, you know, is pretty well understood by this time. I was only repeating what was suggested once by Professor Wood, of Johns Hopkins.

Practically all sources of light, you understand, give out more or less ultraviolet light, which plays no part in vision whatever. The human eye is sensitive to but few of the light-rays that reach it, and if our eyes were constituted just the least bit differently, we should have an entirely different set of images.

"But by the use of various devices we can, as it were, translate these ultraviolet rays into terms of what the human eye can see. In order to do it, all the visible light-rays which show us the thing as we see it—the tree green, the sky blue—must be cut off. So, in taking an ultraviolet photograph, a screen must be used which will be

opaque to these visible rays and yet will let the ultraviolet rays through to form the image. That gave Professor Wood a lot of trouble. Glass won't do, for glass cuts off the ultraviolet rays entirely. Quartz is a very good medium, but it does not cut off all the visible light. In fact, there is only one thing that will do the work, and that is metallic silver."

I could not fathom what he was driving at, but the fascination of Kennedy himself was quite sufficient.

"Silver," he went on, "is all right if the objects can be illuminated by an electric spark or some other source rich in the rays. But it isn't entirely satisfactory when sunlight is concerned, for various reasons that I need not bore you with. Professor Wood has worked out a process of depositing nickel on glass. That's it up there," he concluded, wheeling a lower reflector about until it caught the image of the afternoon sun thrown from the lens on the top of the tower.

"You see," he resumed, "that upper lens is concave so that it enlarges tremendously. I can do some wonderful tricks with that."

I had been lighting a cigarette and held a box of safety wind-matches in my hand.

"Give me that match-box," he asked.

He placed it at the foot of the tower. Then he went off, I should say, without exaggeration, a hundred feet.

The lettering on the match-box could be seen in the silvered mirror, enlarged to such a point that the letters were plainly visible.

"Think of the possibilities in that!" he added excitedly. "I saw them at once. You can read what some one is writing at a desk a hundred, perhaps two hundred feet away."

"Yes," I cried. "What have you found?"

"Some one came into the boat-house while you were away," he said. "He had a note. It read, 'Those new detectives are watching everything. We must have the evidence. You must get those letters tonight, without fail.'"

"Letters—evidence," I repeated. "Who wrote it? Who received it?"

"I couldn't see over the hedge who had entered the boat-house, and by the time I got around here, he was gone."

"Was it Wickham—or intended for Wickham?" I asked.

Kennedy shrugged his shoulders.

"We'll gain nothing by staying here," he

said. "There is just one possibility in the case, and I can guard against that only by returning to Verplanck's and getting some of that stuff I brought up here with me."

Late in the afternoon though it was, after our return, Kennedy insisted on hurrying from Verplanck's up the bay to the yacht club—a large building, extending out into the water on made land, from which ran a long, substantial dock. He had stopped long enough only to ask Verplanck to lend him the services of his best mechanic, a Frenchman named Armand.

On the end of the yacht-club dock, Kennedy and Armand set up a large affair which looked like a mortar. I watched curiously.

"What is this?" I asked, finally. "Fireworks?"

"A rocket-mortar of light weight," explained Kennedy, then dropped into French as he explained to Armand its manipulation.

There was a searchlight on the dock.

"You can use that?" queried Kennedy.

"Oh, yes. Mr. Verplanck, he is vice-commodore of the club. Oh, yes, I can use that. Why, *monsieur*?"

Kennedy had uncovered a round brass case. In it was a four-sided prism of glass, I should have said, cut off the corner of a huge glass cube.

"Look in it," he said.

It certainly was about the most curious piece of crystal gazing I had ever done. Turn the thing any way I pleased, I could see my face in it, just as in an ordinary mirror.

"What do you call it?" Armand asked.

"A triple mirror," replied Kennedy, and again, half in English and half in French, neither of which I could follow, he explained the use of the mirror to the mechanic.

We were returning up the dock, leaving Armand with instructions to be at the club at dusk, when we met McNeill.

"What luck?" asked Kennedy.

"Nothing," he returned. "I had a 'short' shadow and a 'long' shadow at Wickham's heels all day. You know what I mean. Instead of one man, two—the second sleuthing in the other's tracks. If he escaped Number One, Number Two would take it up, and I was ready to move up into Number Two's place. They kept him in sight about all the time. Not a fact. But then, of course, we don't know what he was doing before we took up trailing him.

Say," he added, "I have just got word from an agency with which I correspond in New York, that it is reported that a yeggman named 'Australia Mac,' a very daring and clever chap, has been attempting to dispose of some of the goods which we know have been stolen, through one of the worst 'fences' in New York."

"Is that so?" asked Craig, with the mention of Australia Mac showing the first real interest in anything that McNeill had done since we met him. "Anything else?"

"All, so far. I wired for more details immediately."

"Do you know anything about this Australia Mac?"

"Not much. No one does. He's a new man, it seems, to the police here."

"Be here at eight o'clock, McNeill," said Craig, as we left the club for Verplanck's. "If you can find out more about this yeggman, so much the better."

"Have you made any progress?" asked Verplanck, as we entered the estate a few minutes later.

"Yes," returned Craig, telling only enough to whet his interest. "There's a clue, as I half expected—from New York, too. You can trust Armand?"

"Absolutely."

"Then we shall transfer our activity to the yacht club to-night," was all that Kennedy vouchsafed.

It was the regular Saturday-night dance at the club: a brilliant spectacle; faces that radiated pleasure; gowns that, for striking combinations of color, would have startled a futurist; music that set the feet tapping irresistibly—a scene which I shall pass over because it really has no part in the story.

The fascination of the ballroom was utterly lost on Craig. "Think of all the houses only half guarded about here to-night," he mused, as we joined Armand and McNeill on the end of the dock.

In front of the club was strung out a long line of cars, and at the dock several speedboats of national and international reputation, among them the famous Streamline II, at our instant beck and call. In it Craig had already placed some rather bulky pieces of apparatus, as well as a brass case containing a second triple mirror, like that which he had left with Armand.

With O'Neill, I walked back along the pier, leaving Kennedy with Armand, until we came to the wide porch, where we joined

the wallflowers and the rocking-chair fleet. Mrs. Verplanck, I observed, was a beautiful dancer. I picked her out in the throng immediately, dancing with Carter.

McNeill tugged at my sleeve. Without a word, I saw what he meant me to see. Verplanck and Mrs. Hollingsworth were dancing together. Just then, across the porch, I caught sight of Kennedy at one of the wide windows. He was trying to attract Verplanck's attention, and, as he did so, I worked my way through the throng of chatting couples leaving the floor, until I reached him. Verplanck, oblivious, finished the dance, then, seeming to recollect that he had something to attend to, caught sight of us and ran off during the intermission from the gay crowd to which he resigned Mrs. Hollingsworth.

"What is it?" he asked.

"There's that light down the bay," whispered Kennedy.

Instantly Verplanck forgot about the dance. "Where?" he asked.

"In the same place."

I had not noticed, but Mrs. Verplanck, womanlike, had been able to watch several things at once. She had seen us and had joined us.

"Would you like to run down there in the Streamline?" Verplanck asked. "It will only take a few minutes."

"Very much."

"What is it—that light again?" Mrs. Verplanck put in, as she joined us in walking down the dock.

"Yes," answered her husband, pausing to look for a moment at the stuff Kennedy had left with Armand. Mrs. Verplanck leaned over the Streamline, turned as she saw me, and said: "I wish I could go with you. But evening dress is not the thing for a shivery night in a speed-boat. I think I know as much about boats as Mr. Verplanck. Are you going to leave Armand?"

"Yes," replied Kennedy, taking his place beside Verplanck, who was seated at the steering wheel. "Walter, and O'Neill—if you two will sit back there, we're ready. All right?"

Armand had cast us off, and Mrs. Verplanck waved from the end of the float as the Streamline quickly shot out into the night. It took her seconds, only, to eat into the miles.

"A little more to port," said Kennedy, as Verplanck swung her around.

The Air-Pirate

Just then, the steady droning of the engine seemed a bit less rhythmical. Verplanck throttled her down, but it had no effect. He shut her off. Something was wrong. As he crawled out into the space forward of us where the engine was, it seemed as if the Streamline had broken down suddenly and completely.

Here we were, floundering around in the middle of the bay.

"Chuck-chuck-chuck," came in quick staccato, out of the night. It was Montgomery Carter, alone, on his way across the bay from the club, in his own boat.

"Hello, Carter!" called Verplanck.

"Hello, Verplanck! What's the matter?"

"Don't know. Engine trouble of some kind. Can you give us a line?"

"I've got to go down to the house," he said, ranging up near us. "Then I can take you back. Perhaps I'd better get you out of the way of any other boats, first. You don't mind going over and then back?"

Verplanck looked at Craig. "On the contrary," muttered Craig, as he made fast the welcome line.

The Carter dock was some three miles from the club on the other side of the bay. As we came up to it, Carter shut off his engine, bent over it a moment, made fast, and left us with a hurried, "Wait here."

Suddenly, overhead, we heard a peculiar whirling noise that seemed to vibrate through the air. Something huge, black, monsterlike, slid down a board runway into the water, traveled a few feet, in white suds and spray, rose—and was gone!

As the thing disappeared, I thought I could hear a mocking laugh flung back at us. "What is it?" I asked, straining my eyes at what had seemed, for an instant, like a great flying fish.

"Aquaero," quoted Kennedy quickly. "Don't you understand—a hydro-aeroplane—a flying boat. There are hundreds of privately owned flying boats now, wherever there is navigable water. That was the secret of Carter's boat-house, of the light we saw in the air."

"But this Aquaero—who is he?" persisted McNeill. "Carter—Wickham—Australia Mac?"

We looked at each other blankly. No one said a word. We were captured, just as effectively as if we were ironed in a dungeon.

Kennedy had sprung into Carter's boat.

"The deuce!" he exclaimed. "He's put her out of business."

Verplanck, chagrined, had been going over his own engine feverishly. "Do you see that?" he asked suddenly, holding up in the light of a lantern a little nut which he had picked out of the complicated machinery. "It never belonged to this engine. Some one placed it here, knowing it would work its way into a vital part with the vibration."

Who was the person, the only one who could have done it? The answer was on my lips, but I repressed it. Mrs. Verplanck herself had been bending over the engine when last I saw her. All at once it flashed over me that she knew more about the phantom bandit than she had admitted. Yet, what possible object could she have had in putting the Streamline out of commission?

My mind was working rapidly, piecing together the fragmentary facts. The remark of Kennedy, long before, instantly assumed new significance. What were the possibilities of blackmail in the right sort of evidence? The yeggman had been after what was more valuable than jewels—letters! Whose? Suddenly I saw the situation. Carter had not been robbed at all. He was in league with the robber. That much was a blind, to divert suspicion. He was a lawyer—some one's lawyer. I recalled the message about letters and evidence, and, as I did so, there came to mind a picture of Carter and the woman he had been dancing with. In return for his inside information about the jewels of the wealthy homes of Bluffwood, the yeggman was to get something of interest and importance for his client, Carter.

The situation called for instant action. Yet what could we do, marooned on the other side of the bay?

From the club dock, a long finger of light swept out into the night, plainly enough near the dock, but diffused and disclosing nothing in the distance. Armand had trained it down the bay in the direction we had taken, but by the time the beam reached us, it was so weak that it was lost.

Craig had leaped up on the Carter dock and was capping and uncapping with the brass cover the package which contained the triple mirror.

Still in the distance I could see the wide path of light, aimed toward us but of no avail.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"Using the triple mirror to signal to Armand. It is something better than wireless. Wireless requires heavy and complicated apparatus. This is portable, heatless, almost weightless, a source of light depending for its power on another source of light at a great distance."

I wondered how Armand could ever detect its feeble ray.

"Even from a rolling ship," Kennedy continued, alternately covering and recovering the mirror, "the beam of light which this mirror reflects always goes back, unerring, to its source. It would do so from an aeroplane, so high in the air that it could not be located. The returning beam is invisible to anyone not immediately in the path of the ray, and the ray always goes to the observer. It is simply a matter of pure mathematics practically applied. The angle of incidence equals the angle of reflection. There is not the variation of a foot in two miles."

"What message are you sending him?" asked Verplanck.

"To tell Mrs. Hollingsworth to hurry home immediately," Kennedy replied, still flashing the letters according to his code.

"Mrs. Hollingsworth?" repeated Verplanck, looking up.

"Yes. This hydro-aeroplane yeggman is after something besides jewels to-night. Were those letters that were stolen from you the only ones you had in the safe?"

Verplanck looked up quickly. "Why, yes."

"You had none from a woman——"



"I wish I could go with you. But evening dress is not the thing for a shivery night in a speed-boat"

"No," he almost shouted. Of a sudden, it seemed to dawn on him what Kennedy was driving at—the robbery of his own house, with no loss except of a packet of letters on business, followed by the attempt on Mrs. Hollingsworth. "Do you think

I'd keep dynamite, even in the safe?" he added. To hide his confusion, he had turned and was bending again over the engine.

"How is it?" asked Kennedy, his signaling over.

"Able to run on four cylinders and one propeller," replied Verplanck.

"Then let's try her. Watch the engine. I'll take the wheel."

Limping along, the engine skipping and missing, the once peerless Streamline started back across the bay. Instead of heading toward the club, Kennedy pointed her bow somewhere between that and Verplanck's.

"I wish Armand would get busy," he remarked, after glancing, now and then, in the direction of the club. "What can be the matter?"

"What do you mean?" I asked.

There came the boom, as if of a gun far away, in the direction in which he was looking—then another.

"Oh, there it is! Good fellow! I suppose he had to deliver my message to Mrs. Hollingsworth himself first."

From every quarter showed huge balls of fire, rising from the sea, as it were, with a brilliantly luminous flame.

"What is it?" I asked, somewhat startled.

"A German invention, for use at night against torpedo and aeroplane attacks. From that mortar Armand has shot half a

The Air-Pirate

dozen bombs of phosphide of calcium, which are hurled far into the darkness. They are so constructed that they float, after a short plunge, and are ignited on contact by the action of the salt water itself."

It was a beautiful pyrotechnic display, lighting up the shore and hills of the bay as if by an unearthly flare.

"There's that thing now!" exclaimed Kennedy. In the glow, we could see a peculiar, birdlike figure flying through the air over toward the Hollingsworth house. It was the hydro-aeroplane.

Out from the little stretch of lawn, under the accentuated shadow of the trees, she streaked into the air, swaying from side to side as the pilot operated the stabilizers on the ends of the planes to counteract the puffs of wind off the land.

How could she ever be stopped?

The Streamline, halting and limping though she was, had almost crossed the bay before the light-bombs had been fired by Armand. Every moment brought the flying boat nearer.

She swerved. Evidently the pilot had seen us at last and realized who we were. I was so engrossed, watching the thing, that I had not noticed that Kennedy had given the wheel to Verplanck and was standing in the bow, endeavoring to sight what looked like a huge gun.

In rapid succession half a dozen shots rang out. I fancied I could almost hear the ripping and tearing of the tough rubber-coated silken wings of the hydro-aeroplane, as the wind widened the perforations the gun had made.

She had not been flying high, but now she swooped down almost like a gull, seeking to rest on the water. We were headed toward her now, and, as the flying boat sank, I saw one of the passengers rise, swing his arm, and something splashed in the bay.

On the water, with wings helpless, the flying boat was no match for the Streamline now. She struck at an acute angle, rebounded in the air for a moment, and, with a hiss, skidded along over the waves, planing, with the help of her exhaust, under the step of the boat.

There she was: a hull—narrow, scow-bowed, like a hydroplane—with a long, pointed stern, and a cockpit for two men near the bow. There were two wide, wing-like planes, on a light latticework of wood covered with silk, trussed and wired like a

kite-frame, the upper plane about five feet above the lower, which was level with the boat deck. We could see the eight-cylindrical engine which drove a two-bladed wooden propeller, and over the stern were the air-rudder and the horizontal planes. There she was, the hobbled steed, now, of the phantom bandit.

In spite of everything, however, the flying boat reached the shore a trifle ahead of us. As she did so, both figures in her jumped, and one disappeared quickly up the bank, leaving the other alone.

"Verplanck, McNeill—get him!" cried Kennedy, as our own boat grated on the beach. "Come, Walter; we'll take the other one."

The man had seen that there was no safety in flight. Down the shore, he stood, without a hat, his hair blown pompadour by the wind.

As we approached, Carter turned superciliously, unbuttoning his bulky khaki life-preserver jacket.

"Well?" he asked coolly.

Not for a moment did Kennedy allow the assumed coolness to take him back, knowing that Carter's delay was merely to cover the retreat of the other man.

"So," Craig exclaimed, "you are the—the air-pirate?" Carter disdained to reply.

"It was you who suggested the millionaire households, full of jewels, silver, and gold, only half guarded; you, who knew the habits of the people, you, who traded that information in return for another piece of thievery by your partner, Australia Mac-Wickham, he called himself here in Bluffwood. It was you——"

A car drove up hastily, and I noted that we were still on the Hollingsworth estate. Mrs. Hollingsworth had seen us and had driven over toward us.

"Montgomery!" she cried, startled.

"Yes," said Kennedy quickly, "air-pirate and lawyer for Mrs. Verplanck in the suit which she contemplated bringing——"

Mrs. Hollingsworth grew pale under the ghastly, flickering light from the bay.

"Oh!" she cried, realizing at what Kennedy hinted, "the letters!"

"At the bottom of the harbor, now," said Kennedy. "Mr. Verplanck tells me he has destroyed his. The past is blotted out as far as that is concerned. The future is—for you three to determine. For the present, I've caught a yeggman and a blackmailer."

A new **Craig Kennedy** story, *The Billionaire Baby*, will appear in the February issue.

New Fables in Slang

By George Ade

Illustrated by John T. McCutcheon

The New Fable of the Marathon in the Mud and the Laurel Wreath

A STUB-NOSED Primary Pupil, richly endowed with old-gold Freckles, lived in a one-cylinder Town, far from the corroding influences of the Stock Exchange.

He arrived during the age of Board Side-walks, Congress Gaiters, and Pie for Breakfast.

The Paper Collar, unmindful of the approaching Celluloid, was still affected by the more tony Dressers. Prison-made Bow Ties, with the handy elastic Fastener, were then considered downright Natty.

Limousines, Eugenics, Appendicitis, and the regulation of Combines were beyond the rise of the Hill, so the talk was mostly about the Weather and Married Women.

The baptismal Monniker of the mottled Offspring was Alexander Campbell Purvis, but on account of his sunny Disposition he was known to the Countryside as Aleck.

One morning the Lad did his crawl from under the Quilt at an hour when our Best People of the new Century are sending away the empty Siphons.

He was acting on a Hunch.

The far-famed Yankee Robinson Show, with the Trick Mule and the smiling Tumblers, had exhibited the day before on the vacant Lot between the Grist-Mill and the Parsonage.

Aleck was familiar with the juvenile Tradition that Treasure could be discovered at or near the trampled Spot on which the Ticket-Wagon had been anchored.

It was known that the agitated Yahoos from up in the Catfish Country were likely to fumble and spill their saved-up Currency, thereby avoiding the trouble of handing it over to the Grafters later on.

Aleck was the first Prospector to show. He got busy and uncovered a Silver Buck.

It looked about the size of a Ferris Wheel.

While beating it for the parental Roof, he began laying out in his Mind all the Pleasures of the Flesh that he could command with the Mass of Lucre.

The miscue he made was to flash his Fortune on the Family Circle.

After breakfast he found himself being steered to the Farmers & Merchants' Bank.

He was pried away from the Cart-Wheel and given a teeny little Book which showed that he was a Depositor.

"Now, Alexander C.," said his Ma. "If you will shin up the ladder and pick Cherries every day this week at two cents per Quart, by nightfall of Saturday you will have another Case-Note to put into Cold Storage."

"But, if I continue dropping the proceeds of my Labor into the Reservoir, what is there in it for me?" asked the inquisitive Chick.

His mother replied, "Why, you will have the Gratification of moving up to the Window at the Bank and earning a Smile of Approbation from old Mr. Fishberry with the Throat Whiskers."

So the aspiring Manikin clung to the perilous Tree-Tops day after day, dropping the ruby Cherries into the suspended Bucket, while all of the Relatives stood on the ground and applauded.

One day there was a Conference, and it was discovered that little Aleck was solvent to the extent of \$2.80.

"Would it not be Rayzorius?" queried the Sire of Alexander; "would it not be

Ipskalene if Aleck kept on and on until he had assembled five whole Dollars?"

Thus spurred to Endeavor by a large and rooting Gallery, the Urchin went prowling for Old Iron, which he trundled off to the Junkman.

Also for empty Bottles, which he laboriously scoured and delivered at the Drug Store for a mere dribble of Chicken Feed.

The sheet of Copper brought a tidy Sum, while old Mrs. Arbuckle wondered what had become of her Wash-Boiler.

With a V to his Credit, Aleck put a Padlock on every Pocket in his Store Suit and went Money-Mad.

He acquired a Runt and swilled it with solicitude until the Butcher made him an offer.

It was a proud Moment when he eased in the \$7.60 to T. W. Fishberry, who told him to keep on scrouging and some day he would own a share in the Building & Loan.

Our Hero fooled away his time in School until he was all of eleven years old, when he became associated with one Blodgett in the Grocery Business, at a weekly Insult of Two Bones.

All the time Aleck was cleaning the Coal-Oil Lamps or watching the New Orleans Syrup trickle into the Jug, he was figuring how much of the Stipend he could segregate and isolate and set aside for the venerable Mr. Fishberry, the Taker-In up at the Bank, with the Chinchilla on the Larynx.

For ten long years the White Slave tested Eggs and scooped the C Sugar.

When Aleck became of Age, Mr. Blodgett was compelling him to take \$30 the first of every Month.

He lived on Snowballs in the Winter and Dandelions in the Summer, but he had paid \$800 on a two-story Brick facing Railroad Street.

His Name was a Byword and Hissing among the Pool-Players. Nevertheless, he stood Ace High with old Two-per-cent.-a-Month up at the Abattoir known as the Farmers & Merchants' Bank.

The Boys who dropped in every thirty Days came to know him as a Wise Fish and a Close Buyer. They boosted at Headquarters, so the first thing you know, Aleck was a Drummer, with two Grips bigger than Dog-Houses and a chance to swing on the Expense Account.

A lowly and unsung Wanamaker would be sitting in his Prunery, wearing Yarn

Wristlets to keep warm and meditating another Attack on the Bottle of Stomach Bitters in the Safe, when Aleck would breeze in and light on him and sell him several Gross of something he didn't need.

The Traveling Salesman dug up many a Cross-Roads overlooked by the Map-Makers.

He knew how to pin a Rube against the Wall and make him say "Yes."

He rode in Caboozes, fought the Roller-Towels, endured the Taunts of Ess, Bess, and Tess who shot the Sody Biscuit, and reclined in the Chamber of Horrors, entirely surrounded by Wall-Paper, but what cared he?

He was salting the Spon.

He was closing in on the Needful.

For a term of years he lived on Time-Tables and slept sitting up.

Day after day he dog-trotted through a feverish Routine of unpacking and packing, and then climbing back to the superheated Day Coach among the curdled Smells.

Every January 1st he did a Gaspard Chuckle when he checked up the total Swag, for now he owned two Brick Buildings and had tasted a little Blood in the way of Chattel Mortgages.

One of the partners in the Jobbing Concern happened to die. Before Rigor Mortis could set in or the Undertaker had time to pull a Tape Measure, Aleck was up at the grief-stricken Home to cop out an Option on the Interest.

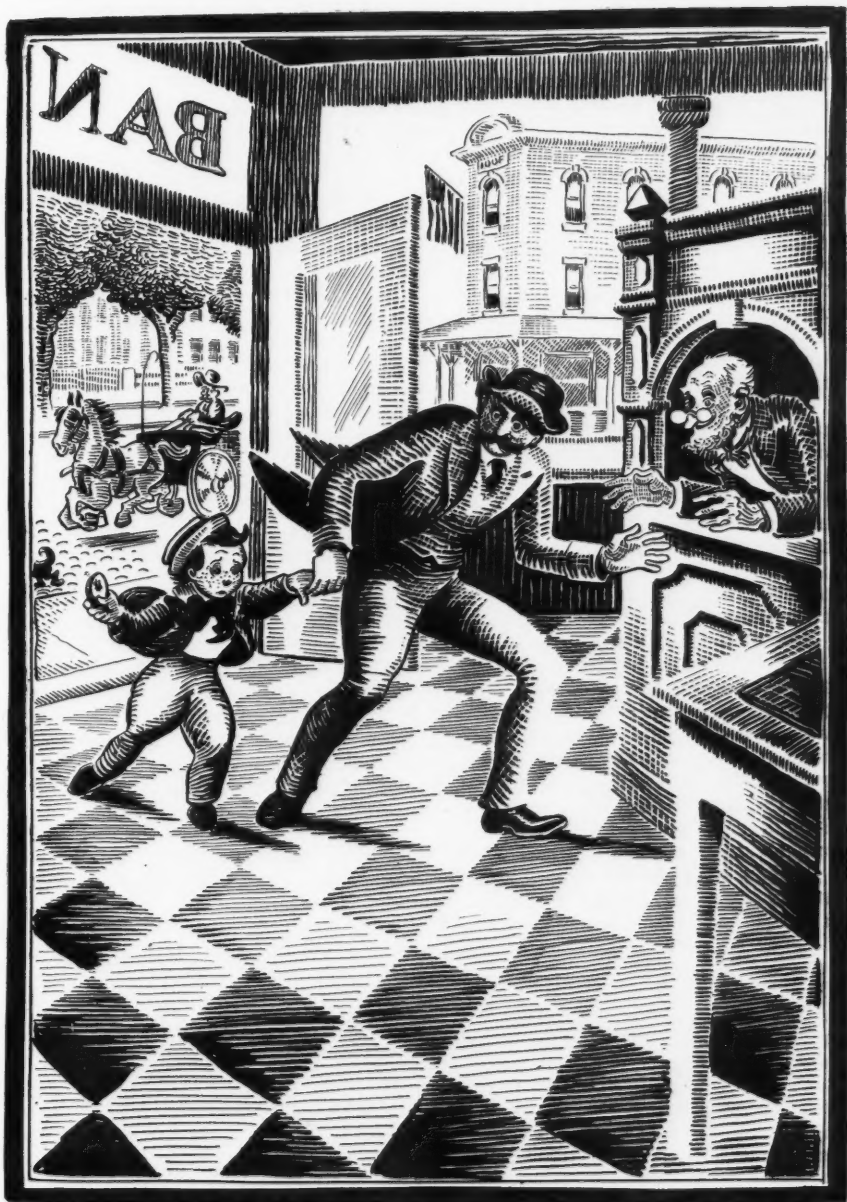
Now he could give the Cackle to all the Knights of the Road who had blown their Substance along the gay White Ways of Crawfordsville, Bucyrus, and Sedalia.

He was the real Gazook with a Glass Cage, a sliding Desk, and a whole Battery of Rubber Stamps.

In order to learn every Kink of the Game, freeze out the other Holders of Stock, and gradually possess himself of all the Money in the World, Aleck now found it necessary to organize himself into both a Day and a Night Shift and have his Lunches brought in.

The various Smoothenheimers who were out on the Road had a proud chance to get by with the padded Expense Account. Aleck could smell a Phoney before he opened the Envelope, because that is how he got His.

With a three-ton Burden on his aching Shoulders, he staggered up the flinty Incline.



— MCCUTCHEON —

The mischief he made was to flash his Fortune on the Family Circle. After
breakfast he found himself being steered to the Farmers &
Merchants' Bank

Away back yonder, while sleeping above the Store, a Vision had come to him. He saw himself sitting as a Director at a Bank Meeting—an enlarged and glorified Fishberry.

Now he was playing Fox and pulling for the Dream to work out.

The cold-eyed Custodians up at the main Citadel of Credit began to take notice of the Rustler.

He was a Glutton for Punishment, a Discounter from away back, and a Demon for applying the Acid Test to every Account.

He was a Sure-Thinger, air-tight, and playing naught but Cinches. No wonder they all took a slant at him and spotted him as a Comer.

The Business Associates of Alexander liked to see Europe from the inside every summer and investigate the Cocktail Crop of Florida every winter, so they allowed him to be the Works.

He began building the Skids which finally carried them to the Fresh Air and left only one name on the Gold Sign.

Up to his Chin in Debt and with a Panic flickering on the Horizon, it behooved Alexander to be on the Job at 7:30 A.M. and hang around to scan the Pay-Roll until 9:30 P.M.

Ofttimes, while galloping from his Apartment to the Galleys or chasing homeward to grab off a few wasteful hours of Slumber, he would see People of the Lower Classes going out to the Parks with Picnic Baskets, or lined up at the Vaudeville Palaces, or watching a hard-faced Soubrette demonstrate something in a Show Window.

It got him to think Folks could frivol around and waste the golden Moments when they might be hopping on to a Ten-Cent Piece.

His usual Gait was that of a man going for the Doctor, and he talked Numbers to himself as he sped along, and mumbled over the important Letters he was about to dictate.

Those who were pushed out of his way would overhear a scrap or two of the Raving and think he was Balmy.

The answer is that every hard-working Business Guy acts as if he had Screech-Owls in the Tower.

Aleck had his whole Staff so buffaloeed that the Hirelings tried to keep up with him, so that Life in the Beehive was just one thing after another, with no Intermission.

With a thousand important Details claiming his attention, Aleck had no time to

monkey with side issues such as the general State of his Health or the multifarious plans for uplifting the Flat-Heads that he could see from his Window.

Those who recommended Golf to him seemed to forget that no one ever laid by anything while on the Links.

As for the Plain People, his only Conviction when he surveyed them in the Mass was that every Man-Jack was holding back Money that rightfully belonged to him (Alexander).

Needless to say, the battling Financier was made welcome at the Directors' Table and handed a piece of a Trust Company and became an honored Guest when any Melon was to be sliced.

All that he dreamt while sleeping in the cold room over the Store had eventuated for fair.

The more Irons in the Fire, the more flip-flops he turned.

He never paused, except to weep over the fact that some of the rival Procurers were getting more than he could show. It was an unjust World. Brushing away the salty Tears, he would leap seven feet into the Air and spear a passing Dollar.

By the time he had the Million necessary for the support of a suitable and well-recommended Lady, he was too busy to go chasing and too foxy to split his Pile with a rank Outsider.

His Motor-Car squawked at the Sparrow Cops when they waved their Arms.

The engineer who pulled the Private Car always had his Orders to hit it up.

Sometimes the Private Secretary would drop out from Exhaustion, but the Human Dynamo never slowed up.

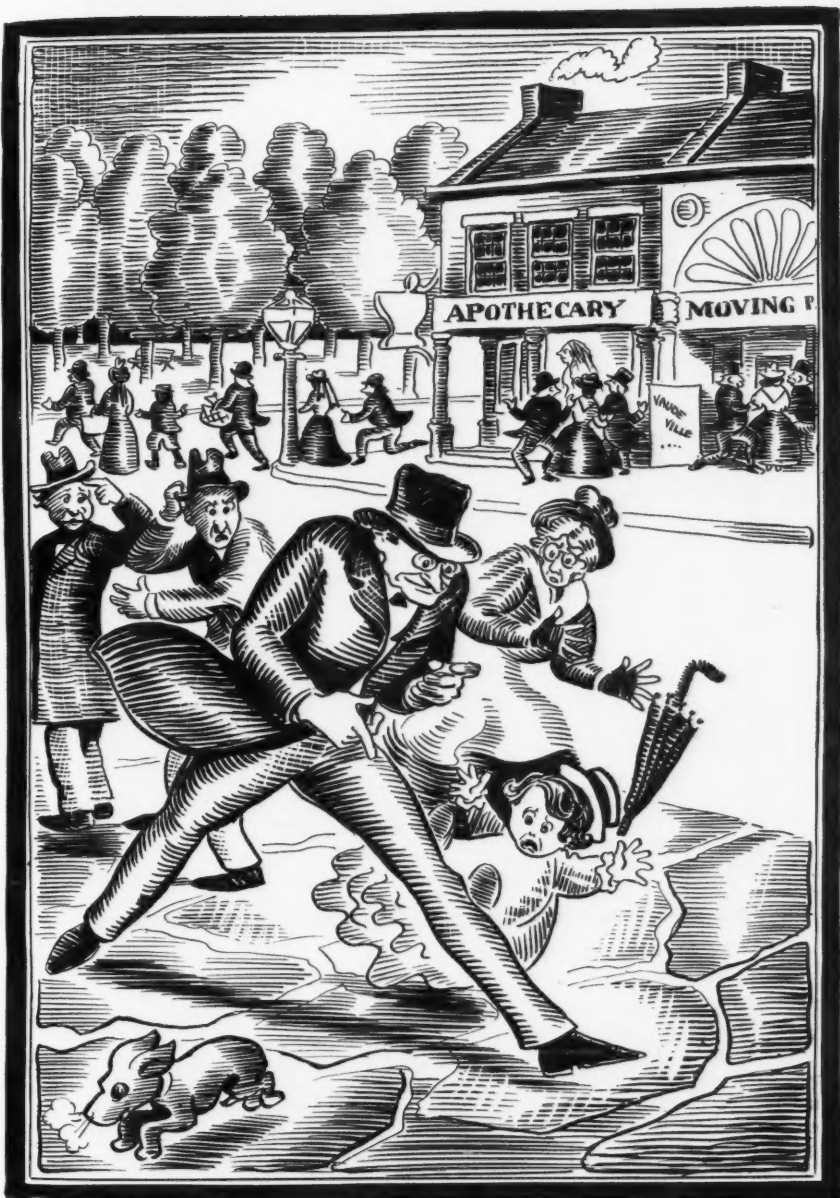
He reposed at Night with a Ticker on his Bosom and a Receiver at his Ear.

When he finally flew the Track and blew out all his Cylinders, they had to use a Net to get him under Control so that he could be carted away to the Hospital.

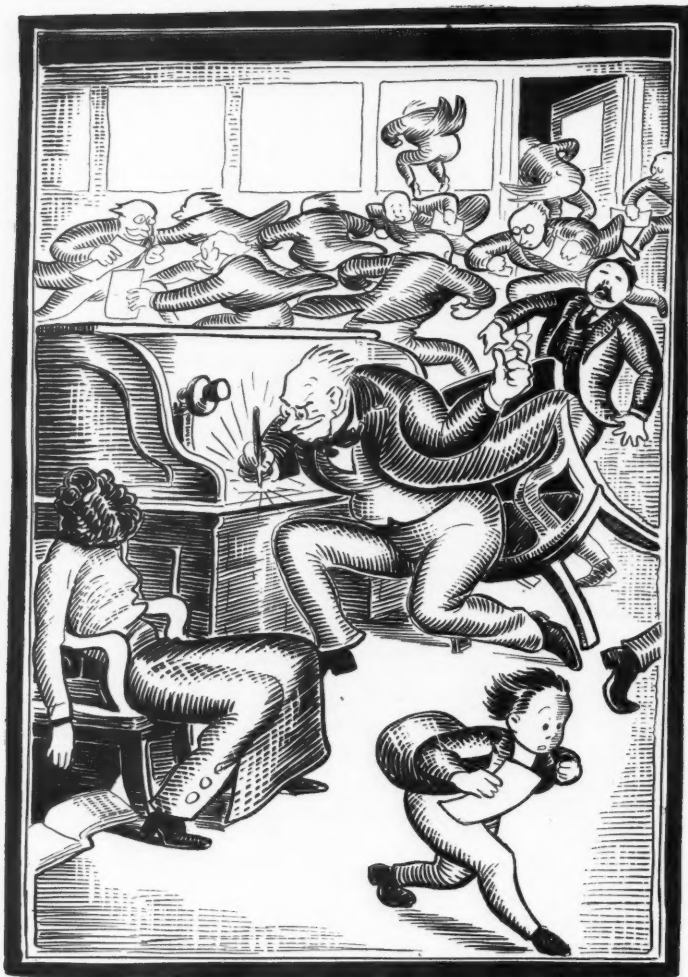
Then the Trained Nurse had to practise all the Trick Holds known to Frank Gotch to keep him from arising to resume the grim Battle against his Enemies on the Board.

He fluttered long before calming down, but finally they got him all spread out and as nice a Patient as one could wish to see.

When he was too weak to start anything, Doc sat down and cheered him along by telling what Precautions should have been taken, along about 1880.



His usual Gait was that of a man going for the Doctor, and he talked Numbers to himself as he sped along, and mumbled over the important Letters he was about to dictate. Those who were pushed out of his way would overhear a scrap or two of the Raving and think he was Balmy



— MCCUTCHEON —

Sometimes the Private Secretary would drop out from Exhaustion,
but the Human Dynamo never slowed up

"And now, I have some News for you," said the Practitioner, holding in his Grief so well that no one could notice it. "You are going away from here. Owing to the total absence of many Organs commonly regarded as essential, it will be impossible for you to go back to the Desk and duplicate any of your notable Stunts. No doubt we shall be able to engage Six Men of Presentable Appearance to act as Pall-Bearers. It is our purpose to proceed to the Cemetery by Automobile so as not to impede Traffic on any of the Surface Lines in which you are so heavily interested. I congratulate you on getting so far along before being

tripped up, and I am wondering if you have a Final Request to make."

"Just one," replied the Great Man. "I'd like to have you or somebody else tell me what it's all been about."

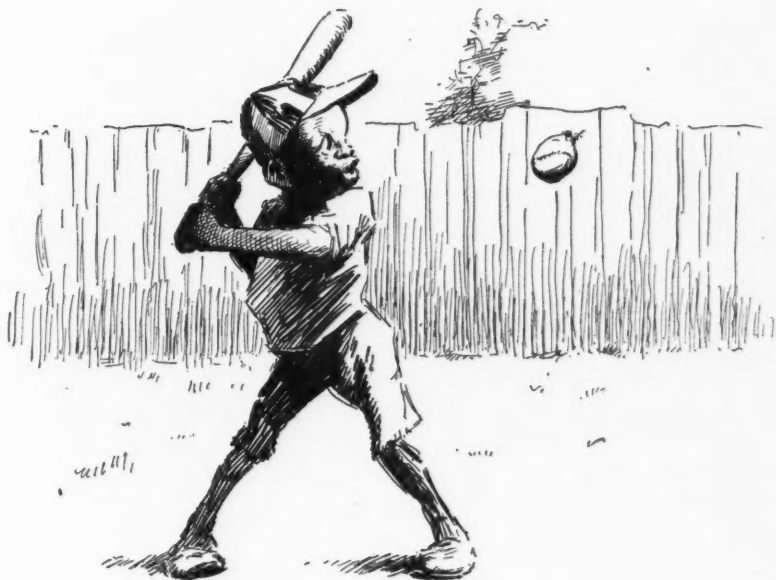
The only remaining Fact to be chronicled is that the original Dollar, picked up on the Circus Lot, was found among the Effects.

A Nephew, whom Alexander Campbell Purvis never had seen, took the Dollar and with it purchased two Packs of Egyptian Cigaroots, Regal Size, with Gold Tips.

Moral: A Pinch of Change, carefully put by, always comes in handy.

Sport in Coonville

By E. W. Kemble



I

"Now den, fo' a high fly wid dis no-count ball."



II

"Great sufferin' catfish! Who done dat?"



III

"A swat like dat am good fo' a home run, ebery time."



Keselle

IV

"An' dis am de time."

